

やる気なし英雄傳 Unmotivated hero's tale.

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Unmotivated Hero's Tale

Arc 1: Carlin Chapter

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Novel Updates

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Prologue

Midsummer. Along the ramparts of the Capital City Eltobur, the glowing red of the sun is reflected slowly.

Beside the solid south gate – the main gate of Eltobur, is a small gate designated as a checkpoint for the traffic outside. The said gate is being used by merchants for import and export of trade products from the other cities, and usually, the post the sentry is guarding should be normally filled with several people.

But now, aside from a young man with blond hair in his late teens standing at the back of the gate, not a shadow of a person was in sight. Though that young man looks like he's still in juvenile age, with the blue armor he wore, along with the chips on that armor, it showed that he is a brave warrior who already experienced the battlefield.

To the place where he stood still, coming from the direction of the castle was a man in his twenties with raven-black hair, facing him straightly while straddling his favorite horse.

"Sir Yui.....do you really have to go?"

Standing in the way in front of the gate, a young man with androgynous features with a blonde hair and blue eyes called out to the man with the black hair named Yui.

"Sorry to bother you"

The blond youth; feeling inevitable, waved his head from side to side in disapproval.

"General Linen is told to be a shrewd person. Even you may not be recognized that easy. Are you really sure you don't want to reconsider?"

The youth knew that he cannot be detained from the present situation of Clarice more than anyone. However, this didn't help from stopping him.

"Eins. You see, in the open battle of Sobakrien just recently, the royal army almost lost all of its troops. The situation is already determined by many"

Eins gave a sigh after hearing those words. Then, moving his body away from blocking the horse's way slowly, the road leading to the meadows outside the castle was revealed before Yui.

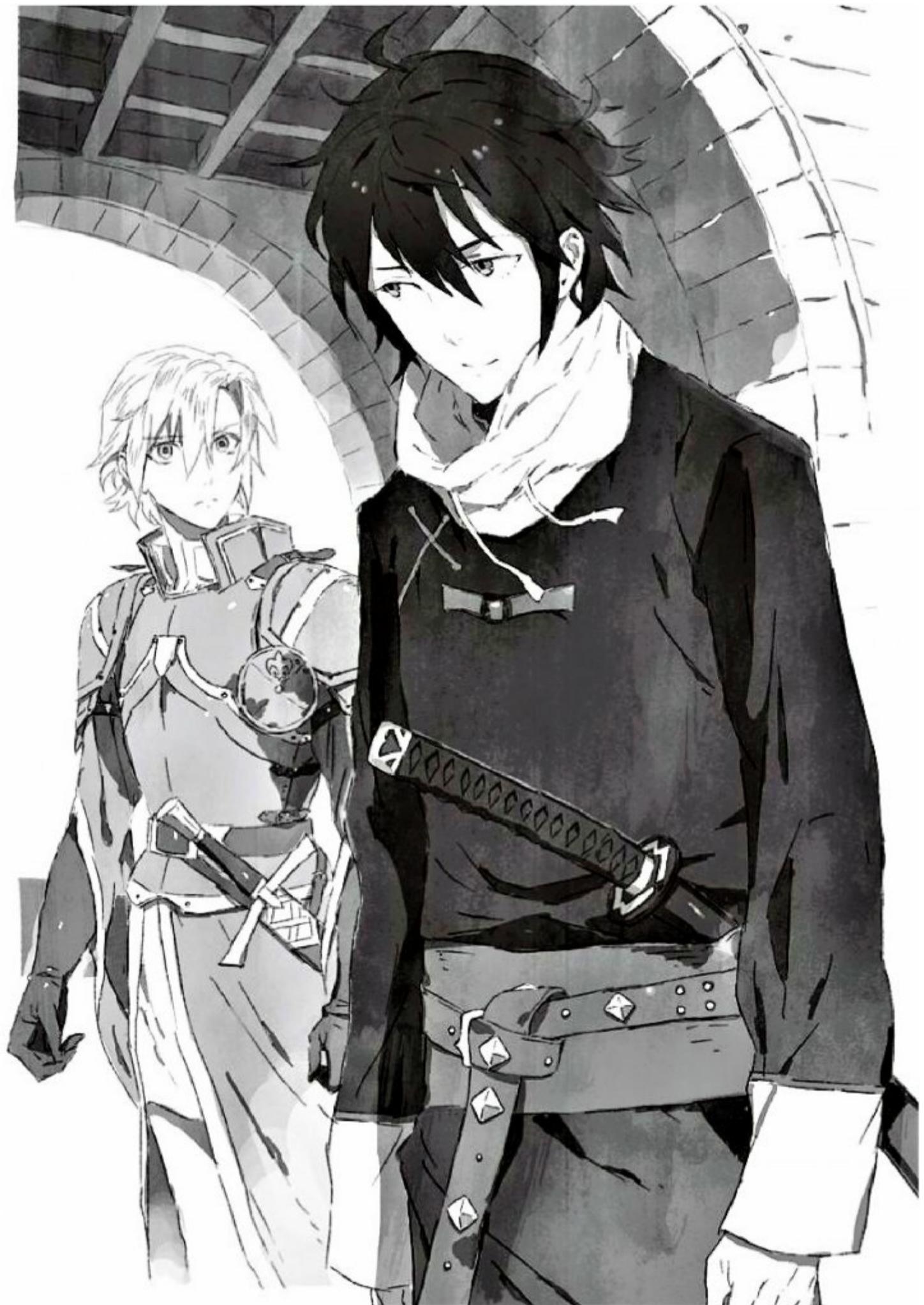
"The next time we meet will be on the battlefield"

"Yeah, I'll entrust this country to you. And that grieving person too"
Yui at his horseback bowed his head to his junior.

"Understood. But please, sir, do not do anything reckless alright? As for that person, you can leave everything to me. Don't worry"

As he said so, Eins presented his right hand to Yui, whose head is still lowered.

"You do know very well that I dislike handshakes, don't you?"



"Yeah"

To Eins that doesn't even lower his right hand even after what he said, Yui scratched his head. Feeling troubled by this, he took off the long sword in his waist, and instead of his own right hand, he made the hand grasp the sword instead.

"This is the substitute for the handshake. I'll leave this to you. It's only for safekeeping. Don't use it, you hear?"

While doing a childish gesture of puffing his cheeks a little, to Yui who pushed his beloved sword onto him, Eins burst into laughter uncontrollably, and allured to that, Yui began laughing too.

"Well then, together with sir's position, I'll borrow this for a while. Anyway, take care"

After receiving the words of his junior at his back, Yui made the horse advance gradually. Between the green of the ground and above the clear blue sky, he aimed at the black imperial soldiers dividing them.

Chapter 1: Carlin's Daytime Lantern

“That’s why I object”

Far west of the Imperial Capital Eltobourgh, Carlin City.

Behind the bushes along the road leading to the southern part of the city, a man with a black hair was inspecting the movement along the highway while constantly being bitten by thicket mosquitoes.

The man gives off a “sloppy at duty” atmosphere, but in spite of that, he is a legit Carlin Troop Strategist.

“Boss, please don’t say that. Wasn’t boss the one who drew up this plan from the very beginning?”

Beside Yui, the man with clean-shaved head shocked by his reprisal, Crary voiced his complaint.

“.....well, yeah, it was me who made the plan. But, you see, you, Kains and Nanya are the one in charge of the plan. So, why is Nanya not here?”

From Crary who has the features of a bandit, to the muscle-toned archer Kains guarding their rear, Yui says so while switching his glance in that order.

“At this late night when the bar is fully opened, do you think that guy will work decently? That’s why boss’ plan is bad in itself”

At this time she is probably drunk by now; when Crary spoke of the woman who would forget everything completely, including her work when drunk, Yui dropped both his shoulders while waving his head.

“Sigh... Even though I, to run away from the clamor of the royal capital, got myself demoted to this district with great efforts, one of my subordinates ran away, and the other subordinate makes the boss work...this wasn’t in my expectations at all. Tell me, my mind. Where did I go wrong?”

Yui who couldn’t use most magic at this age where magic is in its peak of glory, combined with his lack of motivation in doing work, it earned him the reputation of a failure and free food eater in the capital.

To make matters worse, he was rolled up in a dispute for promotion with a senior officer, and after some twists and turns it grew bigger and bigger, ending with him being relegated from the royal capital to this rural district of Carlin.

But to Yui who was given the relegation order accepted the transfer willingly, partly due to the fact that he has a hidden ambition of retiring to the countryside in peace.

After the relegation Yui worked as an administrative official in Carlin, but the subordinates working under him are a gathering of hard-to-deal-with people, thus he cannot yet carry out the comfortable retirement he is yearning for.

“Please don’t stress him so much. From the start, boss only works from noon, right? Thinking about the usual working hours, there is still some left, isn’t it?

“Well, you’re not wrong, but”

Yui is extremely weak at mornings and only goes to work after noon has passed.

Therefore, when it was pointed out by Crary, Yui could do nothing but reveal an expression as if having given up while looking up at the sky and kept silent.

As he had nothing else to say, silence has begun to rule the place, then Kains watching the rear raised a cry toward Yui.

“Commander, the party has come”

Hearing the voice of Kains, Yui followed his line of sight.

A figure of a wagon being escorted by guards was revealed before their eyes.

“Details of the convoy?”

“Four hoodlums, armed with swords on their waist. Among them, only one is in the wagon”

Kains, who has a good eyesight and skills with the bow in the team and was appointed as the scout of this strategy, ascertained the constitution of the party and reported it in an instant.

“Exactly on the intel I’ve got. Hmph... Well then, shall we go as scheduled? On my signal, Kains, first shoot at the lone one, then second on the same timing as

our charge”

“Understood. Take care”

As he said so, Yui verified the plan once again, then Kains who was entrusted with the duty of supporting the rear replied with a big nod.

“Then, let’s begin. Three.....Two.....one.....fire!”

Kains released the arrow on Yui’s signal.

And the next moment, the lone one operating the wagon fell in its place.

“Boss, I’ll go ahead”

Grasping his favored spear, Crary aimed at the guards confused by the sudden situation and charged at full speed.

Seeing the back of Crary, Yui began to run to the place unwillingly, too, dashing out of the bushes and jumping into the highway. Then, the figure of the flustered bodyguards came into his view.

“Wh-Who are you!”

Among the guards, the man who has a scar on the left cheek seemed to be the leader uttered those words towards Yui and company.

But at the next moment he was hit by an arrow coming from a blind spot directly to his side and collapsed on the spot.

“Man, Kein’s skill is still great as ever”

To Kains who showed shooting skills not a single bit inferior in spite of the night, Yui speaks of praise on the spot.

“Boss! No time to admire, I’ll leave the one inside to you”

Crary plunged in the first guard at his back with an instant kill in the middle of confusion and then pranced towards the second guard. Then with a scream his favorite spear was extended, then went through the abdomen of the second guard at once.

“It can’t be helped...I’m sorry for you, but we want to borrow this load for a while. However, because I don’t want to move my body very much, if you like, could you surrender already?”

After Yui sent his eyes to the wagon in an instant, he confronted the last bodyguard who was the only one left, and told him while scratching his head.

Don't fuck with me! Damnit, DIE!"

The man who lost his temper because his companions are done in, while giving off an aura of hatred from his whole body, brandished his sword and with a leap, he threw himself onto Yui.

Seeing that figure, Yui understood that his advice to surrender is ineffective, and closed his eyes partly. To correspond with the movement of the man before his eyes, Yui slightly lowered his center of gravity, and advanced the right foot with a half step.

He grasped the handle of the sword bound in his left waist by his right hand, and in a single breath, the sword was drawn from its sheath and produced afterimages of light. Yui who waved the sword in that form went through the man approaching him, and turned his back to the man as if nothing happened.

A moment later, the sound of the approaching man falling in place was heard in the surroundings.

Haah.....physical labor isn't really my nature"

Muttering in thin air, Yui looked up the night sky where innumerable stars twinkle in silence, then spat out a deep sigh.

He shook his head side to side to erase that feeling, then passed instructions on his subordinates to start looking for the deed supporting the smuggling in the empire.

Chapter 2: Request for an Escort

"Why am I getting called at such an early time..... the world is totally unfair, really"

Early morning of a certain spring, Yui's relegated life in Carlin had reached its fourth year.

He received a summoning from Ernst, the sole superintendent of the Carlin Regional Army, to the aging town hall which also doubles as army barracks in case of emergencies.

There are ten ranks present in the Clarice army; it started from the highest – the Ministry of Military Affairs, to tenth rank, given to new recruits drafted in wartime.

Due to circumstances which is the deployment from the central, Yui was bestowed a sixth rank, and in this Carlin he was appointed as the chief strategic officer.

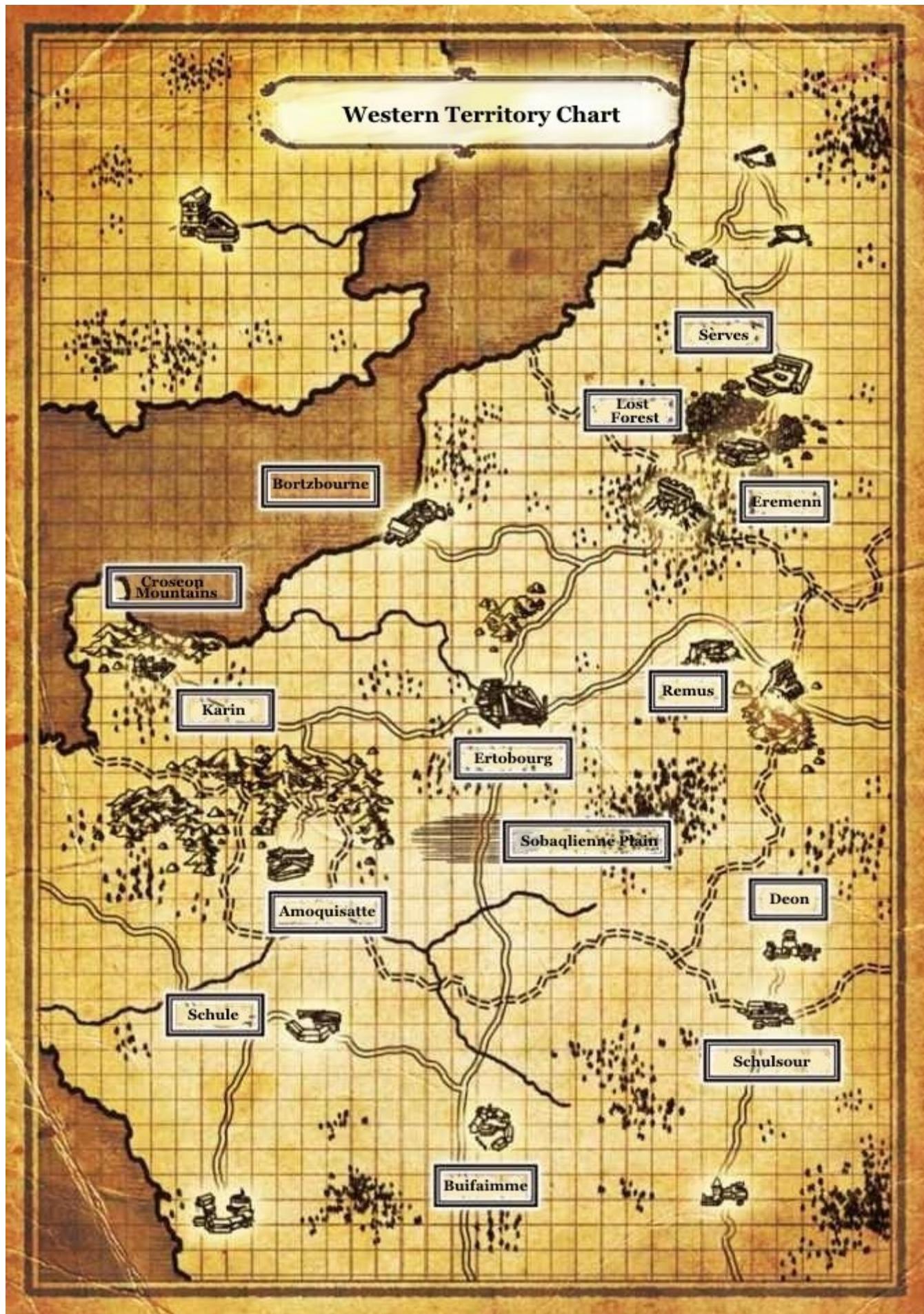
And the one who summoned him, Ernst, is a fifth rank officer and is the current military commander-in-chief of the Carlin Army.

"Still, it's pretty unusual for me to be called at such time, which means the situation is pretty hectic over there....."

In the hierarchy of the local army in Clarice Kingdom, each of the three departments, the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Magic, and Ministry of Tactics should dispatch their officers to the local area, and the locally hired soldiers will be assigned to them – that was the common practice.

However, Carlin is a town located at the westernmost end of the continent and with the mountain ranges at its back, and since it doesn't share any borders with the other countries, its strategic value is equal to none. For this reason, the necessity of military power in Carlin is very low, and all the soldiers hired by the Ministry of Defense covering the town's security are its locals.

Western Territory Chart



(TL Note: Stolen from ErikaWalker's site here. She used Karin instead of Carlin. I prefer the latter because it suits the “medieval” feeling. I mean just look at the other places on the map. They sound so.....old)

Meanwhile, the fact that the central supervision is loose probably caused them to take liberty of the local army, and three years ago, for the first time since the foundation of the country, the order if the Carlin army was brought into question. It is because an aristocrat from the said place heard reports that some of the local soldiers are being used as private armies, becoming the hotbed of corruption.

As a result, the central decided to dispatch personnel other than the Ministry of Defense to act as a corporate inspector to the site. The Ministry of Magic and the Ministry of Strategy kept pushing the responsibility on each other, and in the end, the Ministry of Strategy decided to dispatch a resident military officer to the said place for the first time, and that was the relegated officer Yui Ystats, nicknamed as “The Deadbeat of the Royal Capital”.

“Well, what’s done is done. But what if it’s about a job relocation, how will I refuse this.....”

Ernst, who called him, knew that Yui is really not a morning person so whenever there is a meeting, he always consider to hold it in the afternoon. For the situation to make Ernst call him in this early, Yui felt a bad premonition.

That is why he assumed the worst case scenario which is being relocated back to the kingdom capital, and made his brain simulate on how to decline the offer while walking towards the city hall. By the time he had finished simulating his ways of declining in about five patterns or so in his mind, Yui finally reached Ernst’s office.

Yui put his head into order once again and to the room in front, he knocked on the door modestly.

“Ystats, is that you? Get in”

Responding to the knock, Ernst’s calm voice reverberated towards the other side of the door.

Yui who heard the voice breathed out gently, relaxed his shoulders and opened the door slowly.

As he set foot on the office, what reflected in Yui’s eyes is a blonde man in his mid-thirties sitting on the sofa. At the same time, he caught the figure of gray-haired Ernst, with a stiff expression on the other side of the sofa.

"It's been a long while, Ystats. We have already met when you assumed the new post, though it seems that you are already used to Carlin's waters already"

The middle-aged man with a blonde hair rose up from the sofa from he was sitting on, spread both his arms towards Yui then laughs.

Yui couldn't recall the man's name at once, and as he lowered his head in respect, he moved his eyes toward Ernst.

"Mr. Ystats, over here"

Catching Yui's stare, Ernst prompt him to move next to him.

Yui who was made to approach slowly sunk his waist on the sofa, then finally remembered the good-looking man sitting opposite of him on the list of people's names in his brain.

Count Samuel.

That's the name of the man sitting on the opposite side. And to add it further, a noun called mayor rather than a count was often stuck behind his name.

"Sorry to call you so all of a sudden in this early in the morning. Actually, I was about to make preparations beforehand, but before that I intend to ask you....."

Yui felt a little anxious on how to cut down the talk, but taking into account the mayor's presence, the possibility of the topic to be a transfer is low, so he immediately regained his original composure.

However, this is the first time he saw the mayor present since he arrived here. And seeing the usually mild Ernst with a stiff expression, he felt that something really bad is coming.

"Actually, I want to ask you a request to be an escort. The time period is about one week"

".....Escort?"

Yui asked by reflex to Ernst's unexpected proposal.

Escort missions in Carlin fall down on the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense, so asking Yui who came from the Ministry of Tactics for an escort mission is unlikely to think about.

"Yes. An escort mission. I'm sorry to push this work on you, who was originally from the Ministry of Tactics.....but this time there are some special circumstances"

As Ernst hesitated to talk, Samuel sitting opposite of us continued the story with a smile.

"No, it was me who asked Commander Ernst to ask you. To tell you the truth, one tourist is going to come to my territory from the royal capital, but the visitor in itself is a little bit of the problem. Elise Fon Eltobourgh is the visitor. You know her?"

Yui ruminated over the name Elise, but even after he dug up his memory, there wasn't anyone who fell under his acquaintances. However at the moment he recognized the surname Eltobourgh, Yui felt an impact as if he was hit with a large impact at the back of his head.

"Eltobourgh..... you mean the first princess Elise?!"

Yui alternately looked that the faces of the two to confirm.

Ernst then gave a heavy nod, and at the end of his line of sight, Samuel opened his mouth to affirm Yui's opinion while observing his reaction.

"Yes, that's the one. For the time being, it's said to be a sightseeing combined with territory inspection, but inside my dominion there are no one with a suitable talent in escorting a princess, therefore we chose you, who came from the royal capital."

"I'm sorry to say this, but that's the situation, Mr. Ystats. I think you already know this, but there aren't any subordinates well-educated in the culture of the royal capital in my side either. To be honest, I can only ask you who came from the royal capital. Sorry, but can you fulfill this request?"

Ernst, who was considerably older than him, lowered his head in apology, and Yui being flurried had no choice but to give an affirmation.

"I see, so that's the reason. I'd like to refuse originally, but it's not like I was given a choice to decline, right? Understood, I'll accept this mission. However, I think that the numbers of our military unit guarding the princess are still too few, but.....how shall we go around it?"

Yui asked Ernst as he thought of the faces of the six people of the Tactics Division floating in his mind.

Then, Ernst shook his head as he didn't need to worry.

As for that, it seems that some Royal Guards will be arriving from the capital. So rather than a bodyguard, you'll be playing the role of a guide more"

Upon hearing Ernst's words, Yui felt relieved that he won't have any excessive worries regarding the escort problem.

Of course, if the escorts showed prejudice against the local soldiers, there is a possibility of trouble coming up. Therefore, he's still a little anxious about it, but considering the fact that the situation requires a pressing need for his confirmation, he switched his thoughts.

".....Understood. So, when is Princess Elise going to arrive?"

"That's today"

Ernst, while making an expression as if chewing up a bitter bug, told Yui.

"Today.....is that the truth?"

Receiving a response from Ernst that he didn't expect, Yui took a glance at the ceiling unconsciously, and squeezed his thoughts outside.

"Yes. Princess Elise said that she would like to see the inspection personally. It seems that the same is true from her tours to the other territories, suddenly heading for inspection within the territory without prior contact. Last night was also the first time we received contact, and they have left the capital three days ago and it is said that they are arriving today."

"That's.....quite a tomboyish personality she had, that first princess"

Looking toward the worried figures of the two, Samuel who floated a slightly cringe smile brings back the subject to Yui.

"But Mr. Ystats, since you were in the kingdom, haven't you at least heard the rumors? The royal princess' eccentric behavior, right? It's quite a topic among the nobles"

"Unfortunately, when considering the members of the royal family, I can't

remember that much..... but being called an inspection, where should I guide her?"

"Well, for now, today we have decided to welcome her at my villa in Carlin. As for the schedule at the moment, tomorrow the city, the day after tomorrow the outskirts, and two days after tomorrow the Crocean Mountain Ranges are the following they said that they would like to visit"

When Samuel spoke the name of the mountain ranges representing the scenic nature of Carlin, Yui finally understood the main purpose of the other party.

"Indeed. I understand well what she meant by a tourist. If it's the case then I'll make arrangements with that intention. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must hurry with my preparations"

With that, Yui stood up from the sofa, bowed to the two people and left the office.

"But is it really alright with him? Certainly, if you refer to his grades back in the military academy, but still....."

Samuel told the question he was holding back as he moved his eyes towards Ernst from the door where Yui left.

"Yes. He's an excellent man. Though he is rumored to have always played truant from work within the kingdom, if you examine his works closely, you will find out that almost every single one of them has a single fault at all. In other words, he's clever enough not to make those mistakes happen. Moreover if there is a time left over, he assists others on their work in his own initiative, and there was never a time when he made a plan where he plays the main role nor taking achievements for himself"

"I see.....as expected from the boss himself, you understood him well"

Saying so, Samuel nodded in satisfaction.

Since he became the Chief of Military Affairs, Samuel kept the town safe without failing in any way while going through various troubles, and put his full trust on the aging general.

"Nah, I can be his boss only when he's here. But I'm sure, he will be the one who will stand above me immediately as soon as he returns to the kingdom, although I might retire first before that"

Ernst spoke of the youth with expectation, as if his face that was depressed until just now seemed to be a lie.

Chapter 3: Tactics Division

“So boss, what business did Mr. Ernst want us to do?”

As soon as he came back to the room of the Tactics Division in the city hall, Crary who is always in perfect attendance asked Yui in interest.

Crary was Yui’s first subordinate when he assumed the new post in Carlin. Although he looked like a thief or a member of brigands, he is a fully pledged soldier and has history as a local recruit of the Military Division.

He was originally responsible for collecting information inside and outside the city and reporting to Ernst. Therefore Ernst thought of placing a subordinate whom he can trust to help the man from the capital, and was assigned to the Tactics Division.

Although they have ten years gap in age with Crary being older, he preferred his superior officer and the lax attitude he has. And, among the Tactics Division where its focus rely on independent actions, he often tend to act together with Yui with complete trust in their abilities.

“You already heard of it? Rumors sure are early to catch up as ever”

On the six desks of the room, Yui sat on the desk located on the deepest part then turned around to Crary.

“Oh really? Boss who usually goes to his office in the middle of the day just went to the office in such an early morning, it’s quite the hot topic already. You said that the mayor has come, so why don’t you talk a lot about it? There are also some various talks coming out from that guy”

“Well, that’s a bit confidential , but.....I know what you mean”

Certainly, it’s true that it’s not an excuse for being late for work.

However, it is indeed unexpected for them to see Yui come to the office on time, thus it made a huge clamor.

Then, as Yui returned his glance to him while scratching his head, Crary who has “I want to hear what happened” written all over his face came to his sight.

"to put it simply, I'll be going to be a tour guide for an Eltobourgh lady, kind of"

"An Eltobourgh, huh. But being a tour guide of a lady, isn't that nice? Is Ms. Eltobourgh a young lady? Huh, wait..... Eltobough, you said?"

"Yeah, Elise Fon Eltoburgh. If I remember correctly, was she seventeen this year?"

"Eeh!? Seriously? THAT Eltobourgh?"

Crary opened his eyes wide and raised his tone, and Yui who was delighted by his reaction nodded in a big way.

"Yes, that first princess indeed. Well, it's merely an inspection of the local town and guiding her to the usual tourist attractions, and once she's satisfied we'll go home"

"Still, a tour guide, huh.....but why is boss chosen?"

Well, probably because I was in the royal capital for a long while, they are expecting that I have learned proper etiquette for this"

"I see. It seems that boss was made to pull the short end of the stick"

As Crary gave a bitter smile, Yui scratched his head twice with a troubled expression.

"Don't you think? Well, it's pretty much that"

Yui replied while giving a bitter smile back.

Then, exactly at that timing, the wooden door of the Tactics Division was opened.

Surprising the two inside, they moved their eyes towards the door, and saw a big man holding a big bow outside followed by a blue-haired woman carrying a bare sword on her shoulders, entering the room.

"Kains, didn't I tell you not to take the bow inside the town hall? Or perhaps I should say, Huth, your sword, your sword! Put it in the sheath at least"

Yui faced the two who entered inside rudely and admonished them.

However, even though he said it a thousand times, these two who still

haven't fixed their behavior didn't even show any care at all.

Seeing no hope for them, Yui on the other hand spat out a sigh, and in spite of sitting directly on the desk, he pushed himself forward.

"Ah, Captain, good morning. But how rare for you to be at work at this time. Woops. Looks like Big bro Crary came too"

as if not hearing the frank advise of Yui a short while ago, Kains sat down on the rear with a bow in one hand, smiling.

and Huth, on the other hand leaned her bare sword against the wall in silence as usual.

"Oi, you two. It seems that there will be an escort mission for a few days starting today. Well, Boss's is a separate matter, but in front of the escort subjects, show a little courtesy or manners at least!"

"Wait.....why is mine a separate matter?"

Yui had given up to their manners a long time ago but still can't help to voice out his protest.

However, with his remarks just passing through their ears, Yui could do nothing but spit out a big sigh on his subordinates. Then, making a compromise in his mind to give up on the current scenario, he switched his thoughts towards the planning and assigning of personnel.

Chapter 4: Meeting and Reunion

Yui together with Crary, Kains and Huth stood still in front of the main gate of the town.

When it was little past noon which was the designated time, they spotted a group clearly different from the merchants who come and go around the town. While being surrounded by thirty horsemen, a carriage gradually approached them.

“Boss, is that really a carriage of an aristocrat?”

“Fool, your voice is too loud. And it’s a royalty, not an aristocrat-”

Yui was about to reprove Crary, but because the leader of the bodyguards is approaching right in front of them at that time, he hurriedly bent on one knee and bowed his head. The remaining three were left standing, but when Yui ordered to do the same, though it was awkward, they took a pose in the same way.

“Boss, actually, I have once joined as one of the bodyguards of Earl Samuel, but this one is clearly bigger than that of the earl’s”

Audible only to Yui, Crary hit a light joke while lowering his head.

As this was not a formal visit to another country but a domestic inspection incognito, they used something more plainly than the ones on the usual royal carriages. Nonetheless, the magnificence the carriage gave was clearly different when it became something owned by the royal family. Samuel is clearly part of the nobility in this area that can be counted with two fingers, but comparing him to the royal family is a little cruel.

While still bowing his head, Yui tried to peak to the carriage with an upward glace, thinking over how many years it would cost in his annual salary. While his head was being mulled over with those trivial details, the rays of the sun blazing Yui until just now was blocked suddenly.

As he cleared his thoughts and raised his face, in front of his eyes was a man looking down at Yui from his horseback, who seemed to be the its commandant

being right next to the carriage.

“Tch. I heard that a local military officer will guide us here, but I didn’t expect it to be you”

As he declared so while clicking his tongue, a figure who seemed to be the leader got off from the horse and landed in front of Yui. Because he was blocking the sunlight, Yui couldn’t see the person’s face and felt bewildered in his speech and behavior, but then as he saw the silver hair and heard the voice of the man, he recalled a nostalgic memory and called the name of the other party at once.

“Lute? If it isn’t Lute! It’s been a while”

“Hmph, call me “Sire^[1]” now. I was promoted to sixth rank before this escort mission, and was assigned as the captain of the royal guards”

Being promoted to sixth rank in six years after graduating from the military academy is considered as an early promotion.

Graduates of the military academy normally are bestowed with an eighth rank when they enter the army, seventh rank four years after graduation, and sixth rank eight years after graduation if no anomalies encountered on duty on that period.

Regarding ranks, Yui who had achieved a sixth rank promotion in just three years is unusual. However, this was due to special circumstances of being relegated to a rural area and as a result of pushing responsibilities of each ministry, he won’t be promoted for the next ten years. In that essence, the large majority judged it as nothing but failure. On the other hand, Lute’s promotion to sixth rank indicated he treaded the path of a military elite. Added to that, the Royal Guards Lute is belonging to is a unit under the jurisdiction of the royal family; with only the elites of the Ministry of Magic could enter, so even with Yui being a senior to him, in general the royal guards are assumed to be of higher rank than him.

“Is that so? Although I left the military academy and it has been six years since then, you have been promoted as the captain of the royal guards already? I’m glad for you, Lute”

"I said it's Sire now. Either that or security chief. Even you who is demoted to such a district should know the difference of our standpoints"

The frivolous attitude of Yui, Lute popped a nerve and raised his voice unintentionally.

"Hahaha, I understand, Lute"

But being with him for a long time in the past, Yui didn't care about it and just laughed casually. But this provoked Lute even further to raise his tone more.

"That's why you c-!"

"What is this clamor all about?"

The moment when Lute's frustration reverberated the surroundings, a clear voice came from inside the carriage, making him turn around with surprise in his face. At that timing the profound door of the carriage opened and a girl in a white dress came down.

Yui's eyes were subconsciously drawn in to that figure. Certainly, she is a fair, slender and beautiful lady. But more than anything else, her eyes are brimming with vitality, as if it was blazing.



"Y-your highness, th-this is... I'm truly sorry. It seems that the local officers here do not understand proper courtesy"

"If I'm not mistaken, you are graduates of the same class in the military academy, right? I have heard it from Eins inside the carriage as I was on my way here. The commanding officer of the Tactics Division here is your junior, and you were the Three Seats member of the Magic Division. Am I correct?"

"Eins? Eins!"

Responding to the two different calls, a handsome man with blond hair and blue-eyes peeked from the inside of the carriage with a troubled face.

"Uhmm, good day, seniors. Your highness, because they are on bad terms with each other from the past, please pardon them. Isn't it because you promised to keep it a secret, that I told you that story?"

"Oh my, so that's what it was. Oh well. In exchange for consideration to these two, please let me off for this, okay?"

Elise made an innocent smile on her well-featured face, sticking out her tongue with unassuming modesty. As he saw it, the anger of Lute who took a lot of hardship coming here disappeared, then dropped his shoulders.

"Your highness, please forgive them already"

Eins, fearing the sermon of Lute after this, brought up the excuse. However, Elise who seemed to do not hear his words walked out of the carriage.

Despite the turmoil in the surroundings, she approached straight to Yui, presented one hand to him who knelt on one knee with his head held down.

"You are the commanding officer of the Istats Division, am I right? I am Elise Fon Eltobourgh. Pleased to be working with you."

"Yes, I as well, your Highness Elise."

Yui softly took the slender white hand with his left and bowed with respect.

1.TL Note: Lute was called Royal Guard-dono (近衛殿) in the raws, but for the sake of the setting of the story, since this is not an isekai novel (You know, novels of reincarnated/summoned Japanese) I will omit any forms of Japanese honorific and try to translate it in English equivalents as I can and keep its medieval age setting. This will surely test my skills as a translator but will surely increase the quality of my translations, or that's what I hope to do.

Chapter 5: At the Dinner Party

Yui who received Elise started leading the party to guide them, but the march did not advance at all. As soon as the carriage entered the city, disregarding the worries of Yui and Lute, Elise stopped the carriage a couple of times to observe the buildings inside of town without even a tinge of uneasiness, surprising the townsfolk by their presence. From time to time, she suddenly leaves the horse carriage and heads to the alleyways, dropping by at some street stalls, from the beginning to the end acting as she pleased, causing those who accompany her to run about in confusion.

With circumstances going beyond their expectations, when they arrived at Earl Samuel's villa greatly behind schedule, at that time, excluding her Highness herself, everyone including the chamberlains and the guards have exhausted all their energy.

Of course, Yui being the guide is not an exception, suddenly being dragged in various places around the town, his willpower and physical strength is deprived by the princess bit by bit, and was thinking of wanting to sleep in the room prepared at the earl's cottage.

Yui did not want to attend at all, but he could not skip the job, and acknowledged the fact so he accepted with a sigh. He: for the only reason that he can eat dinner for free, convinced himself forcibly, as he placed his luggage in his room and head for the venue. Then when Yui arrived at the hall of the Earl's detached residence, inside were lots of luxurious cuisines that you will not normally see, lined up in a crammed place.

Yui looked around to look for a face he might recognize, but in addition to the princess' escort guards in the venue, it is being flooded with Calrin's bigwigs with the count who is the very first on the list, Yui abandoned his hopes early. Receiving the champagne for toasting for the time being, he leaned against the walls of the entrance of the room, and decided to wait for the party to begin.

“Everyone, I am sorry to have kept you waiting”

Around the time that the bubbles of the champagne becomes difficult to see,

wearing a pure white dress, while saying so, Elise showed up scattering cuteness on the spot, that anyone in the place held their breath.

Following after her were her chamberlains and Eins who is representing his father, the archduke of Rhine. As they rose on the platform prepared at the center, the hall was filled with a magnificent applause.

“Everyone, Thank you very much for such a heartfelt welcoming today. As it was also a sudden visit, we would like to apologize for the inconvenience”

She said so, and after a gentle curtsy, Elise suddenly tightened her facial expression.

“Now then, Though I have just come to this town, I have been convinced. And that is..... I don’t like you all”

The room which was in a peaceful welcoming mode until now, became frozen from those unexpected words, in that moment the dinner venue was surrounded by silence as its time stopped all of a sudden. Everyone drank their spit on the princess’ next move.

Seeing the reactions of the people at the venue, Elise floated a smile as if she was satisfied, and her noble lips unleashed the flames again on the spot.

“I’ll say it again. I hate you all. Now then, please excuse myself for today.”

As she declared so, she gave an elegant bow that no one else could imitate. And wearing a smile, as she got off the platform, in order to go out of the room, she began to walk toward the entrance. The people who happened to be present from the spot, while exchanging looks at each other, scattered in all directions, opening a way from her in front. Elise walked calmly on that newly opened road.

Then when she had reached to the front of the entrance, her eyes met with Yui who was leaning on the side of the wall nearby. Elise had a congealing smile until then, but as she put a smile of despise to Yui, he quickly averted his gaze, making her leave the room as it is.

Those who were left weren’t able to show any movement to the sudden situation. But as time went by, the atmosphere which waited eagerly for the opportunity to dispel the binding curse of silence began to wrap the space

about.

Then, being responsible for that role on that occasion could only be left to the highest ranking noble left on the spot, to Earl Samuel and Eins representing the archduke who accompanied the princess in the inspection. The people's eyes focused on them.

Samuel who recovered from the unrest of the unexpected event the earlier, exchanging eye signals with Eins, and Eins who had an expression that it can't be helped, stood beside Samuel.

"Thank you very much for the hospitality and kind welcome. With the princess being a bit tired from the long trip, I would like to express my gratitude once again"

"Archduke representative Eins, we are truly obliged. Though we do not know her real intentions, we are thinking that the scolding from the princess is her wishing for a better territory management for us, so I intend to remain loyal to the kingdom in the future"

Although some discomposure remained in those words, considering the possibility of future intervention from the royal family, the earl chose to remain cautious and chose his words carefully.

Eins on the other hand, aware of Samuel's intention, understood that there is no malice in that unique appeal.

"Those words, will surely go to my father, and will surely reach his majesty the king"

"We are much grateful. Well then, everyone who is tired of the long trip, and every one of Carlin, today, I would like you to all enjoy the feast to all of your hearts' contents. Though it's a bit late, I would like you all to join in chorus. Cheers!"

At that moment, from the mouth of everyone, the toast was recited with an octave lower than intended.

As time advanced in the dinner party, when the alcohol started to take its effects, everyone gradually voiced criticism on the actions of the princess a while ago, and it leaked to the point that it can be overheard by many.

"Just being raised in a higher standing, and look how she turn up her nose around us"

"Hmph, that meddling brat, why must we associate with her? Because Earl Samuel is being nitpick in the first place, the whole Carlin is being involved too!"

"If Count Tarim still has dignity, he should have rejected this inspection in the first place"

Centered around the plump Count^[1] Tarim who is in his mid-fifties, are the Tarim faction who are the forerunners of the anti-earl faction, spreading such topics here and there. Let alone the guards, the air is gradually becoming troublesome especially for Yui who arrived from the royal capital.

Yui who thought he had fulfilled the part of his salary deposited the glass in hand to a nearby butler. About to leave the room, at the moment he was about to step his foot outside the entrance, someone grasped his shoulder from behind.

"Lend me your face for a moment"

From there, stumbled the figure of a pitiful archduke substitute grasping the collar of a completely flushed red-faced Lute.

1. (TL NOTE: Earl and Count are the same as well as Hakushaku in Japanese. I Differentiate them in this story for easy understanding of whose faction is whose. Count = Tarim, Earl = Samuel. Anti-count and anti-earl)

Chapter 6: Motive

Afterwards, when Yui was about to sneak out one Eau-de-vie from the dinner party, dragged by a drunk Lute, they went to the billiard grounds inside the earl's house.

"Yui, let's have a showdown!"

"Even if you tell me to play, against a magic soldier this won't be even a game....."

Although billiards was a game popular among the people in the royal capital way back the old times, with the golden age of magic at its current prime, the way of playing it changed from the old one.

In the past it was simply thrusting the ball with a stick called the cue, but in the recent years adding stress to the ball by magic is permitted on the rule, and for one who is not a magician it is an overwhelming handicap. For that reason, in the recent years the billiards of the magic-users came to be known as Magic Ball, and is considered gradually as a different category from the old billiards^[1].

"You being the opponent won't change anything. But fine. What should we play instead?"

"That's right, should we do a game without magic involved instead?"

It's not as he was a sore loser, but he, a magic specialist didn't like taking advantage against someone like Yui who can't practice most magic.

Eins, peeking glances while sitting meekly as a borrowed cat beside the two, made a suggestion with a soft voice.

"How about playing cards? You can play them without magic. And since we can do it with three people, I can participate as well"

Eins proposed playing cards, and because it won't put him a handicap, they decided go with this.

"So, cards is it then? Since the game has been decided, Lute, can you borrow the cards?"

“Hmph. Okay, fine. But you don’t run on me”

With a haughty sigh, Lute turned his heels out of the room and looked for a servant nearby.

When Lute left the room, Eins called out to Yui again.

“Senior Yui, it’s been a long time”

“Yeah, for the first time in three years. But really, it didn’t even come to my thoughts that you would come to Carlin. If you’re going to come and all, you should’ve sent a message to me first”

Yui poked fun of his junior in a sulky tone, but the two were pleased with the reunion.

“But leaking the information on the confidential visit of the royal family will be really bad in various ways, you know?”

Knowing that, He faced Yui who was still saying contact me this contact me that, Eins who replied for a few days, smiled.

“Certainly, you’re right. However, I never thought you would come with a princess”

“Truthfully speaking, I also wanted to see my senior’s new place of designation..... but I never thought that it would be like this”

“Isn’t that right? If I were to be accompanied by a princess, my stomach will definitely go out of order completely. But I was really fascinated by the speech she made back then”

As Eins remembered the “I hate you all” speech of the princess, mixed feelings showed in his face.

“You see, the princess is famous for being an eccentric person. I always think she has some kind of motive to say such things...”

“My intuition tells me that they had done preliminary investigations before coming here. Actually, I really don’t want to go to work right now... just what on the world is she doing?”

Yui who was aware while spending three years in this town, recalling the facts

they had investigated, he asked Eins.

“It’s still unclear. Although the earl mayor seems to be a good person, some people tend to go overboard. When my senior was knocked down the stage three years ago, I already heard the stories leaking inside the military, and the royal family seemed to be anxious about it. But despite of it not being directly under the jurisdiction of the royal family, Elise’s movements are completely unexpected even for the military. There is a possibility that my current position as a representative is within the range of the confusion Princess Elise wanted to cause as well, or that’s what I think”

Yui then began laughing at Eins’ answer.

“Now You’re becoming a real successor of the archduke right now. Time really passes by so fast”

“And who do you think is the main culprit that made me this way? Besides, I have also grown a bit when I was put in the military, you know?”

For being treated as a child, as a form of protest, Eins snatched the eau-de-vie off Yui’s hand, opened the cork, poured the contents in a glass and moved it to his throat.

“Sorry, sorry. But yeah, our ranks have finally ranked in the same sixth place, and I don’t want to feel like a teacher forever. In fact you might even surpass me next year”

“Well, even though there are circumstances in my household, the fact that you were my teacher won’t ever change. Well, you might say that it’s all thanks to the circumstances of my household that I was able to push through, so in other ways I am grateful to my father”

Unlike Yui who’s a commoner, Eins is the eldest child of the Duke of Rhine, one of the four major powers of the kingdom. It means that in the future he will be in a position to lead the country in his shoulders. Therefore, different from the treatment of the ordinary military school graduates, after Yui left the kingdom, he was assigned to work in the Posterior Service Division^[2] dedicated only to aristocrats.

Meanwhile, when the princess decided to have a sudden inspection, although

the selection of personnel was mainly done by the a royal guard of Ministry of Magic, the Ministry of Tactics also decided to dispatch talented personnel under the reason of balancing personnel affairs from each ministry. This is where Eins, the son of the Grand Duke enters the story, who willingly consented as a volunteer.

“But for the Lord of Rhine to authorize it as well, normally, aren’t they supposed to oppose such mission?”

“Of course they were against it from the beginning. But when I brought up the topic about being the princess’ escort, they said “if that’s so, then its fine”. Well, it’s because he’s that, you know? He’s like “the princess and our son should get along well”, you know? Though his perverted mind is coming out when he said that”

“Was he that kind of person? When I was in your place, aside from being bold and open-minded, I thought he was a serious person at the very base”

As Yui recalled when he was still Eins’ tutor before entering the military academy, several nostalgic memories have been revived.

Yui had lost both of his parents, so that time when he was still in the military school he lived only with the support of the kingdom’s scholarship. Having difficulties making ends meet, Ahmed, an instructor at the military academy at that time, being pleased with Yui’s efforts, brought him a job of being a private tutor. And that pupil being tutored by Ahmad who is on good terms with the duke, is no one but Eins himself.

Actually, Eins is somewhat attached to his intelligent teacher, despite being young and lax. On the other hand, the Duke of Rhine who requested an introduction of a private tutor, wanted a person with better accomplishments and requested Ahmad to do it instead. And because of that, he didn’t even bother looking at Yui who was still a student back then, and intended to dismiss him as soon as possible.

But when Eins saw him, one month, two months after, the contract is extended and extended, and when the Rhine duke noticed, he started to prefer Yui better than anyone else.

Soon, Yui was formally entrusted as Eins’ tutor, also implying of financial

support to Yui, and even after Eins entered his first year in the military academy, it still continued for one year, until Yui entered the Ministry of Tactics.

When Yui entered the Ministry of Tactics, Duke Rhine thinking that wants him to serve under Eins in the future, at first tried to recommend him to the Rhine Household as an officer. However, Yui refused, saying that he cannot take care of him any longer. Whenever he recall those times, Yui sworn in his heart that he will surely repay the gratitude he received many times to the father and son of the Rhine house by all means.

Comparing Eins in his memory to the man in front of him right now, Yui could only immerse himself in deep emotion as he became all grown up, then poured the eau-de-vie into the glass on the right hand of Eins, urging him to drink.

“Thank you very much. W-well, that’s it. This is my father’s ploy, but even if he is strangely serious, much more courting the princess, I can’t even start a proper conversation with her. Well, that level of ambition, I think it is more suitable for a person of his stature, right?”

As he said so, Eins wet his throat slowly with the newly-poured eau-de-vie.

“Well, isn’t ambition somewhat the origin of youth? Without a goal and getting old as a senior citizen, apart from the four archdukes, I guess it’s like that”

“Then you’ll be considered as fully matured, you know? Why did you get caught on something like being relegated by the Personnel Affairs? Do you dislike the royal capital that much?”

“Yeah, why did you leave the kingdom?”

At that time, Lute grasping a set of cards in one hand, walked directly in front of Yui. Then taking the eau-de-vie in his right hand, he chugged directly from the bottle at once.

Aaaah, even though I tried hard to filch that one...”

“Shut it! Answer my question first. Why did you leave the kingdom?”
Yui threw a sigh in the threatening attitude of Lute, then turned towards him.

“Lute, is the area clear?”

“Yeah. I checked. There is only us around here”

Lute was aware that Yui’s relegation is not just a simple adjustment between each ministry in the face of official/public military authorities. And they predicted that there is something that they cannot be made in public, he was taken out to make them do the talk. With Lute’s threatening attitude, Yui sighed and prepared himself, then after surveying around Lute and Eins, he began to speak with a frown slowly.

“Do you know Third-ranked Coatman?”

“is it about that director of the Information Bureau of the Ministry of Tactics? That Coatman?”

Eins put on his glasses, and remembered the always well-groomed midget who always wear of the foul smell of bureaucracy.

“Yeah, that Coatman”

“I also know that person. He always turn up in large scale exercises in the Ministry of Magic. So, what did that third rank Coatman do?”

“Oh, nothing much. They just staged a coup d'état, that's all”

“A WHAT?”

With eyes almost popping out in his sockets, Lute dropped the empty bottle of eau-de-vie. Yui gave a nod to his reaction and kept talking.

“The origin of it was selling information of the military to the Kerlun Empire, well, You might say he was a man of that level. That was then found out by Second-ranked^[3] Shalem and was blackmailed for it.”

“When you say Shalem, are you referring to the former vice-minister of the Ministry of Tactics?” Lute drank his spit to the name of the unexpected person who came out.

“Shalem dragged Coatman and tried to eliminate all his political rivals at that time. And unfortunately, on the very first of the list was my boss, Director Rheinberg”

At that time Yui was in charge of planning external strategies at the Bureau of Strategy in the Ministry of Tactics, analyzing the information entering mainly

from the Information Bureau, and was involved in the future military projects. Of course the young Yui doesn't have the authority of such a plan himself. His main duty is to coordinate with each of the Military Ministries with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The top of the Bureau of Strategy at that time is the third rank Rheinberg.

"Third rank Rheinberg may have some loose parts, but he is a good-natured person. Well, various kinds of stuff happened. They were eventually cornered in planning the coup, so they planned to sell this country to the empire"

"Is that really true, teacher?"

Eins by reflex looked back to Yui who was telling a story beyond their imagination. Yui saw their eyes mixed with bewilderment, and understanding the feelings of uncertainties they had, gave a light nod to remove their doubts.

"Ah, quite unfortunate, isn't it? Anyway, they managed to stop their plans from happening somehow, then by tracing the concerned officials one after another, they succeeded in breaking down their factions. To be honest I expected that these actions will incur the enmity of these guys but I didn't expect the sparks to fly towards me as well. Then, the director, in order to save me from the crossfire, sent me to a place out of their reach. In the pretext of a joint project with the ministry of other personnel affairs, he sent me here"

Towards Yui's explanation, the two people could only gave frozen looks. However, Lute who remembered that there was an incident happening where several of the military officials suddenly retired or were suddenly demoted, he could not bring himself to doubt the credibility of Yui's story, and was convinced that he certainly took a bite in it.

"For a man who did not even do anything about the incident, I didn't think that a spark will also reach him"

"Well, I did worked on a little bit of mischief, you see. Aside from that, it caught the ears of the royal camp and as a result, Coatman was imprisoned. But Shalem himself, who was the source of all of this, didn't let his tail get caught up to the very last moment, ending only in resigning as a vice-minister, and is still living comfortably in his territory"

Yui gave a bitter smile, removed his line of sight from the two, and then

looked at the ceiling. That gaze seemed to penetrate the walls of the ceiling, reaching towards the sky.

"If what you all said is true, why didn't you tell us a word of it? I dislike you, but including Alex, I still think you are my rival even now. And besides, do you know how rough it became for Eins when you left?"

"Senior Lute, please, just give me a break from that"

"Hmph. Leaving that as it is, you always ran away while I was about to win. I will make sure you pay back all the debts you owe me right now"

As he said so, Lute did a grin and threw the box of cards in front of Yui.

After that, Yui overwhelmed them by a big margin causing him to incur the wrath of Lute, which also became a new source of headache for Eins in this visit.

1.TL NOTE: Pretty ironic that the greatest pool player of all time is nicknamed "The Magician" for his superb kicks and bank shots, and how he amazes everyone in making unbelievable shots, all of it done in championship tournaments. The sad thing is his fame is overshadowed by Pacman.

2.(後方勤務部署)

3.TN NOTE: I want to change the names of these rankings but I can't decide what I should follow. Do you have any set of names for ordinal ranks of one to ten? It's kind of bothersome to keep saying "Sixth-ranked Lute, Sixth-ranked Yui Ystats, Sixth-ranked Eins Rhine, Second-ranked Shalem etc". I'm thinking of using Spanish or Italian ordinal numbers for the ranks because it sounds so weird in English, but it feels slightly cringey to use the Spanish and Italian ordinal numbers also... do you know any ranking words in games that doesn't use any language? I just need alternative names from rank one to rank eight. BADLY. Or just leave them as it is if that's what you want.

Chapter 7: Parting

The following day, which was the second day of inspection of the town of Carlin, although they were worked to death with the guidance and explanation of each place in the city, no problems occurred on the tour.

But on the third day, on the verge of inspection of the suburbs, an anomaly occurred.

“What does this mean?”

In the warehouse where grains collected to serve as tax payment is stored, Elise is standing in front of the personnel in charge of management.

“Y-your highness, the error on the records is just a coincidence”

Unable to withstand the pressure of the princess' gaze, Third Class Aspir, who is currently in charge of the management, looked down as he answered.

“Is that so? Then, the issue of which half of the grains collected as land tax are missing, are just also a coincidence?”

“N-no your highness. Although it was the case, I don't know the cause of it”

To the unexpected pursuit of the princess in front of him, the officer on duty was not able to emit words any further.

All of it began when Aspir went to the grain warehouse to work, and as usual he passed time by playing chess with his co-workers. All of a sudden the door at the entrance was opened with great momentum, and a party including the princess came into the office.

“As a member of the royal family, I would like to confirm with my own eyes what the people have contributed.”

Elise who began to talk suddenly made the royal guards restrain Aspir, then made the chamberlains search for the records of the tax payments, while she walked towards the grains storage as it is.

Aspir who didn't even know what happened was dumbstruck, but when he was held down and the search for the tax records began, he just began to

realize the seriousness of the situation.

“Please wait! We haven’t received any search warrant to this facility. On what legal basis would you conduct this inspection?”

Wanting to stop the actions of the princess, Aspir desperately struggled and cried out, but before the strong prowess of the royal guards, he wasn’t able to do anything.

And when one of the chamberlains found the tax payment records from Aspir’s desk drawer, he realized the end of his own fate. After that, by comparing the contents of the records with the goods in the warehouse which were certainly less, while wearing a smile, Elise looked down at him.

“Your highness, we have finished auditing all the contents of the records with granary in question. Well, it’s perfectly pulled out. Here”

Eins, who had been forced to do office work for some reason, met halfway with the princess with a smile.

“Good work. Well then, Mr. Lute, let’s detain them and go back to Earl Samuel”

“However, are you sure about this? We should have visited with the pretext of a tour till the end. If we did this, the local officials will certainly retaliate later on”

Even Lute himself didn’t hear such schedule of inspection until the last minute, and was thinking that it will only be a simple tour, so he couldn’t hide his unrest in the sudden events yet.

“There may be a little opposition afterwards, but you don’t have to worry since you can’t do anything about that”

“But-“

Lute is serious in nature, and because he has done all the duties assigned to him perfectly and in accordance to the rules so far, he was promoted up to what he is now. For him, he was unable to accept psychologically these extrajudicial audits behind the scenes by using the power of the royal family.

“Don’t you think? Then, shall we hear the opinions of the staff in this place.

Will someone call Mr Ystats and the others waiting outside?"

In response to the princess' words, one of the chamberlains rushed outside the building and pulled out Yui and his company who had been waiting outside without any explanations inside.

"My, my, it was done really flashy, wasn't it?"

Looking at the figures of the captured officials, Yui understood the circumstances.

"Oh? I thought you'll be surprised, but you're unexpectedly calm"

"Well, because you changed the schedule and was made to guide to inspect the grain storages suddenly. Then there must be something there isn't it?"

Yui said so with a wry smile, stretching his arms out.

"So how do you do it as a man if the ministry of Military Affairs?"

"How will I do it?"

"Like putting these people in prison, searching for related parties, somewhere along that lines?"

Elise said so as to provoke Yui, But Yui only expressed a troubled face while scratching his head.

"Ah, Yes. I will report this to Sir Ernst for the time being"

"Because our boss always moves without reporting, right? Ernst's father is really having a hard time"

Crary who was laughing while standing next to Yui who answered "that's right", issued instructions to Huth who was waiting behind. Huth saluted with a sleepy face, then went out to report.

"Just reporting it?"

"Yes. Is there a problem, your highness?"

With a bitter smile, To Yui whose composure did not change at all, as if it was stirring her insides, Elise pierced a glare towards Yui.

"Is there a problem?! Because you do it like it was a routine job, no matter

how much time will pass, the reformation of this region will not advance!"

"Even if you say so, my current job is only guiding and escorting. I really don't want to say this, but I'll dare say anyway. Are you thinking you can charge the Tarim factions with just this level of evidence? Well, unless you verify it with the Ministry of Justice, you cannot call this an authentic act"

That said, Yui scratched his head while having a troubled look on his face.

"Hmph, wise words for a demoted soldier whose only work done is in the office. Do you not think that this is a very good opportunity to purge and discipline the corrupt officials and lower aristocrats in this region?"

"Princess Elise. How do you expect an official to go back on his words and reveal those who break the rules just like that? Our job here is to keep the rules, not violate them. And it is even so against criminals. Yet using coercion on the personnel responsible of the local security? We do not attempt to take part in this, no matter how much admiration we have of the royal family"

Yui said so and turned around, trying to exit the building.

Not expecting Yui's speech and conduct with a tinge of criticism towards her, Elise could only scowl at his back as he was about to leave the room. Crary who was near Yui, made a voice containing a bit of disgust towards Elise.

"I know this may be a bit rude to say this, but it is just as boss have said. Well, for big-shots of the royal capital like you who think that they are the law, you won't even care about this, will you?"

While saying so with absolute sarcasm, the royal guards tried to jump on him for his rudeness, but Elise raised her hand, causing them to stop.

"If so, leaving these violation of the law as it is, you are also responsible for it, are you not? Before saying something about someone, how about working in accordance to the hour's equivalent to your salary, Mr. Daylight of Carlin?"

For making a fool of Yui, the usually gentle Kains, to the least of their expectations, advanced one step towards the princess. The royal guard escorts who saw it blocked the front of the princess in a hurry, half-enclosing Kains and Crary, and a tense situation was born.

"How barbaric! These people act like bandits! I don't need any of your service anymore. Remove your presence in front of me immediately!"

When Elise threw those words towards Crary and the others, Yui turned towards her. He then opened the cylinder attached in his waist, containing a bundle of papers, then threw it towards the princess.

"Then I'll give this you, Your Highness. With that, your job in Carlin should be done, now why don't you quickly go back to the capital and play your own politician of justice? As for the work hours of my salary, I believe with this I have sufficed enough work on my part, so we'll be taking off from the escort duty. We will be leaving now"

After saying so, flicking his hair with his hand, Yui turned his back and left the building. Crary and Kains, who were being encircled by the royal guards followed afterwards.

Elise who was left in the place, traced the pages at hand with her eyes, and from there, the names of a large number of Tarim faction and their flow of money, the movement of goods, even the hiring for city employees... all are described in detail.

Chapter 8: Whereabouts of the Incident

“What’s with that guy?”

Being left in utter amazement as Yui and his company heave the grain warehouse, Elise murmured in spite.

“I apologize for his impolite speech and conduct, but he is my precious mentor and senior. Please forgive his actions for me, Your Highness.”

Taking the speech of Elise as an invective, Eins lowered his head immediately. Lute with a soft “Please” also lowered his head in apology.

She herself thought that she wasn’t wrong, but feeling uneasy with the two people’s actions, Elise spoke to them.

“Hmph, Oh well, he’s just a run-of-a-mill soldier. I shouldn’t be bothered of a man of that level. The problem is this”

Elise looks over the bundle of papers thrown at her once again.

“If this is true, then half of the entire lower aristocracy here could be arrested. But, it’s hard to swallow this without chewing it over piece by piece. Should we?”

Judging the details and the amount of content, Elise was convinced that the material handed to her is correct. It was even to the point that she’s impressed, being able to provide such papers with great detail.

Honestly, She really wanted to reject the other party based on how he acted on her a while ago, but for her not carrying out anything despite the amount of preparations presented before her, she could no longer hold on to her pride anymore.

“So, what will we do from now on?”

Because discord was transmitted to the surroundings, from the standpoint of the Chief of Security, Lute asked Elise about the plans for the future.

“For now, let’s go to Carlin for the time being. Since I was planning to have a tour at the Crocean Mountains tomorrow, let’s have a forced inspection at the Magic Stone workshop over there. As far as this document is concerned, it says

the workshop has also took a bite in this”

“Does that mean you believe in the documents that guy Yui wrote?”

“I don’t know yet whether this is really credible or not. But we’ll find out on tomorrow’s inspection. If I found out that the contents of these documents are not true, I’ll send those low-lifers to the central court”

As soon as Elise stated her objectives, Lute saluted and then gave orders to his subordinates, in order to go back to Carlin.

“Yui Ystats. I don’t really like that man.....”

Hearing the mutters of the princess leaking out, Eins could only press his hand on his head and breathe a deep sigh.

“I’ve done goofed”

With a bitter smile, it was the first words Yui spoke in front of everyone when they reached the room of the Tactics Division.

“This stupid boss!”

Shouting an angry tone towards him, was a tall red-haired woman wearing light armor suited for magic soldiers.

Upon hearing that the guards escorting caused problems to the princess yesterday, Nanya who is on standby duty on the Tactics Division all by herself flew into a rage.

“Calm down, Nanya. I believe boss have some sort of plan for us”

That said, Kains tried to mediate, but upon receiving Nanya’s glare, Kains and Crary were vilified too.

“Shut it! You think you two are out of this? Well, you’re not——you bald henchman and useless muscle-head!”

““Yes ma’am. We’re sorry””

The two apologized at the same time.

“Haaah, What I going to do now? Making that dynamic exit and all. Are they going to cut off my head? I knew it, it’s my head after all...”

Although Yui himself got scolded frequently, he rarely gets angry. However, insulting his subordinates is another story. Among his bad habits is that he gets heated up easily when his subordinates are insulted, but for Crary and the others, it was why they adore this young captain so much. But this time, that habit had turned themselves in the worst case scenario.

“Hey Kains. If I’m not mistaken your household was a merchant’s, right? If a bandit rages inside the shop, I can catch it immediately, and so do you feel like hiring an excellent guard?”

“No customer will come to such a store if the security guard looks like the bandit itself”

Kains laughed heartily towards Crary’s offer, who then began groaning while worrying about the future of his own career.

Unable to keep up with the mindset of the two anymore, Nanya walked over to Yui’s desk and gave a question to him.

“Captain, wasn’t it possible for you to hold down Tarim’s neck before it lead to this?”

“That’s impossible. No matter how much circumstantial evidence I obtain, they will first issue an order for an arrest warrant – and that is after I lay the groundwork with the judicial authorities in the royal capital. And if you think about it a little bit more, there is a possibility that it won’t even reach Tarim unless we provide a little more physical evidence. As for their subordinates and the lower nobility, they will just cut off their tails right away”

Yui assumed post in this town three years ago, conducting an internal investigation inside the military.

The Carlin Army has been managed by a single personnel from the Ministry of Defense back then, but because the internal management is becoming loose, they decided to dispatch Yui as a temporary officer. That’s where Ernst, the chief of the Carlin Army, requested Yui for an internal investigation, and as a result if the investigation inside the military, they were able to grasp the involvement of the Tarim faction in corruption, and now are already in the final stages of arranging the material evidence.

“But with this, all the credits will go to that princess. Well, taking the matters of

us aside, this is now a special opportunity for captain to return to the capital once again”

Nanya thought of Yui, with an expression tinged with sorrow. She was once a ruined adventurer running rampant on the streets, then Yui picked her up. Lacking in motivation, but always capable and generous, this officer who is also her benefactor, a part of her is thinking it would be better for him to return to the capital.

“I’m not going back to the capital. Therefore, concerning the documents regarding Tarim and his gang, whether in my name or not, I was prepared to go over the Ministry of Justice as planned. I’m beginning to like this town, and who will take care of these problem children when I’m not here?”

“Problem children, you say? Look who’s in a serious “problem” right now!”

Contrary to her words of blame to her superior like before, a smile appeared on Nanya’s face.

That is when the door suddenly opened, and accompanied by Huth, Ernst stepped foot on the room.

“I will say this early on. Ystats, you are not dismissed. Perhaps you are thinking why am I telling you this, either way, before that I have to get you one more work done”

“What happened?”

With Ernst not in his usual tone of saying, Yui expected the worst situation happening.

“Tarim is gathering his private soldiers and mercenaries in is residence.....in other words, it’s a revolt”

After realizing his expectations hit the bulls-eye, Yui could only curse the gods in his mind.

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Chapter 9: Revolt

“So, how big is the scale?”

Yui quickly switched his thoughts over and asked Ernst.

“According to Kureha’s report, the numbers seem to be ranging up to 50 people, majority are mercenaries who fell into ruin. It seems that the hoodlums of the army are pulled out afterwards. However, the problem emphasized in this report is that there are two or more fire and wind magicians mixed in them. I don’t think it’s possible for them to acquire magicians right away, so maybe they belong to the count’s original protégés”

Ernst who was affiliated with the Tactics Division read out the contents of the report of Kureha who was assigned on the surveillance of Tarim.

“Hey chief, I want to ask something. Which part of the Croceon Mountain Range is the Magic Stone Workshop located?”

Having a bad feeling in the inclusion of the magic solders, Yui asked urgently.

“Workshop, huh? Because the magic stones are excavated on top of the Croceon, if I’m not mistaken, rather than constructing it at the foot of the mountain, it was built at halfway up the mountain”

When he heard the answer, Yui imagined the worst case scenario has happened.

“Boss, what are you worried about?”

“Yeah. The Royal Guards of the Kingdom has as many as 30 horsemen on standby. I don’t think we have to worry about anything”

Crary and Kains were curious at Yui’s strange concern about the situation. When speaking about the royal Guards of the capital, each one cavalry is said to be equivalent to five average horsemen and infantry, so they are thinking that fifty soldiers and mercenaries would not be even a match for them at all.

“Crary, do you know the conditions of this revolt of Tarim to become successful?”

"Well, that is somewhere between killing the princess, or capturing her as a hostage"

Yui noded once at Crary's answer, then supplemented with his own.

"Right on. Even if it's a revolt, Tarim doesn't have enough power to cause an uprising against the kingdom. If we assume they do, they have no other choice but to defect to the Empire or the Aier Republic. Although it can be said that it will be only their victory if they succeeded on their objective right here, which is murdering the princess or capturing her. On the contrary, what will be the victory conditions for the princess in this battle against the rebels?"

"Well, probably either they annihilate them or drive them away"

Crary readily answered Yui's question.

"Exactly. In other words, the Royal Guards must defend the princess and oppose the rebels, but the rebels only have to aim at the princess. This is a big handicap. And the best handicap is that the rebels probably will set up a battle in overwhelmingly dominant circumstances. Do you know when that is?"

Those who were present on the spot glanced at each other's faces, looking for answers. But no one was able to provide one.

"Ahem. And what will that be, Ystats?"

Upon clearing his throat, Ernst asked onto Yui.

"Murder by Arson. That's why the situation is a race against time. We need to prepare the Carlin's whole army for dispatch"

"Apparently, it's a hit in here too"

Before them were two people who were left as the staff in the workshop, thrown down with their hands bound up.

The magic stone workshop is the power source for various kinds of livelihood as well as military affairs, and is set up in between the grove halfway through Crocean. The magic stones in the Carlin market are supposed to be monopolized by the kingdom originally. However, according to Yui's surveillance, nearly half of them were found to be flowing into the pockets of Tarim.

Your Highness, isn't it time for us to descend the mountain?"

"You're right. Secure the ledger and other material evidences proving the selling through illegal channels. After that let's pack up and go down"

With the main purpose getting achieved, Elise showed a satisfied smile on her face. However, the illegal selling carried out here being a fact only proved that the contents of the documents Yui had thrown to her were true to an extent. Because of this, rather than rejoicing the settlement of the case, she also felt antipathy towards the current situation.

...but when the evidence gathering was completed and Elise was about to give orders to return, suddenly panicking voices of the guards outside of the workshop came to her ears.

"It's a forest fire!"

A royal guard came running from the outside of the workshop yelled in all his voice and reported as loud as possible.

"What did you say?!"

As soon as he received the report, Lute dashed outside. Eins who was standing by Elise also headed to the window of the workshop and confirmed the fire surging in from the surroundings.

"There is no mistake. There is certainly a fire! Prepare for escape immediately!"

Eins shouted instructions to the surrounding chamberlains, forcing them to urge forward despite their unrest, driving them all outside the workshop.

But upon making it outside, Elise who rushed out of the workshop could only see a wall of flame generating like a storm in the surroundings with the workshop at its center.

"Is there any escape routes?"

"We still don't know. Other than the eight guards left as bodyguards, all the others are currently searching for escape routes in the surroundings"

"Good. As soon as an escape route is established, carry out a forced descent immediately"

As soon as Lute gave his orders, the royal guard who responded ran off to search for a place with weak flames.

Although Elise was a somewhat strong-willed woman, she was still a 17-year old girl, and before the blaze of the wall of flames that burned the surroundings, she felt weak in her knees completely. Eins who saw it checked the status of the surroundings, quickly returned to the cabin, searched a bucket, filled the contents with water, and splashed it over the head of the princess.

"I apologize for the impoliteness, Princess Elise. Although your figure wet with water still looks graceful even at such time. Well then, shall we start?"

Hearing the words of Eins, Elise who had regained her composure, although her legs are still trebling somewhat, she was now to an extent that can walk on her own.

"Thank you, Eins. I never thought you were such a great man"

Hitting a joke against Eins, Elise started to recover herself. While encouraging the chamberlains who could not hide their unrest, different from the Royal Guards who seem to be relatively calm, they pressed the preparations for an escape route.

"Reporting. The fire appears to be a little weak in a route heading towards the foot of the mountain. There is no other way to descend this mountain aside from this route"

As one of the royal guards reported so, Lute looked back and faced Elise and told her.

"We'll go with the report. Please run through the foot of the mountain right away"

"I understand. The captain and the others?"

"We will accompany you of course, but this will be a race against time. Princess Elise and Eins, please descend the mountain path first with the guidance of the four Royal Guards leading the way. The other four will be added to guide the rear. Troops, prepare for dispatch!"

The strong soldiers of the Royal Guards surrounded Elise in Lute's command.

"Understood. Captain, I'll entrust the other chamberlains to you"

"Please leave it to me. It is my mission to make all members descend the mountain safe and sound. You don't have to worry about us, as we will go down the mountain right after Your Highness' party has gone ahead. Anyway, please go now before the flames get stronger"

Elise nodded in reassurance to the words of Lute, then accompanied by the Royal Guards from the front and rear, they started to descend the mountain path, choosing a path with a relatively good foothold.

That time, they still haven't noticed, on the other side of the blazing flames, the shadows chasing over the figure of Elise.

Chapter 10: Ambush

As soon as the preparations for the entire cavalry is complete, together with the military affairs chief, we will advance towards the Magic Stone Workshop. I will take four men with me together with it”

“Understood. Don’t push yourself and overdo it”

“Sorry, but “pushing yourself” and “overdoing” is not in my dictionary, chief”

Yui said so with a smile on his face towards Ernst.

“Now then, Please excuse us”

After he said so, Yui saluted, then walked over to Crary behind him.

“Boss, what about that Kureha?”



"She is as it is. Just tell her not to go out unless unless it's for reporting"

Yui immediately replied to Crary's question.

“Understood. It is wise to increase the number of intel gatherers as well”

“I’ll leave it to you. After that, Nanya, you will apply Waterball Spell on everyone as soon as we reach the site. Got it?”

“Aye. Prepare for it, because I will make you wet so hard”

Nanya said so while raising the both ends of her lips, and Huth who doesn’t seem to want to get wet expressed disdain on her face. Kains who saw it placed his hand on Huth’s head, smiling broadly as usual.

“Good. Well then, let’s move”

“Princess Else, rest assured. A little more and we’ll break through this fire”

“Yes. I understand”

Receiving the words of encouragement of Eins, they desperately descended in the blazing mountain path despite of the flames grilling them little by little. They have already passed through the area with huge flames, so the temperature of the surroundings gradually started going down.

We we’re waiting for you, princess”

Suddenly, a voice reverberated throughout the surroundings, and the burnt trees ahead of Elise and Eins collapsed.

“Watch out!”

Because he tried to find the source of the voice, Eins’ reaction was slightly late, but he somehow managed to throw himself in front of Elise while the trees rolled towards them.

Because he jumped with all his strength, Eins couldn’t control his power, so the two ended up rolling on the ground. While bouncing back and forth through the slope several times, they somehow managed to stop when they hit a tree nearby.

“Are you alright, Princess Elise?

Although he managed to protect her despite of being covered with scratches and wound marks here and there, Eins spoke to the princess.

“Good work. But our business with you is over. Because right now, you will disappear here”

Eins gazed at the source of the voice. From there, two men dressed as soldiers stood, blocking their path.

“I guess at this point we don’t even have to ask. Tarim’s thugs”

“Being branded as thugs might be a little too far, but it’s true that we have a cooperative relationship with Tarim”

“Elder Brother, we have cut off the rear, but we don’t know when the other people are coming. Let’s not waste our breath here and do the job quickly before they come”

The man who was called “Elder Brother” by the man at his left side clicked his tongue, then as if accepting the words of the “younger brother” as a fact, he extended his right hand in front.

When Eins aimed his gaze a little toward the front, the guards who are leading the way earlier were getting suppressed by dozens of armed soldiers, and their lives were cut off one after another. Seeing their situation leading to an unfavorable outcome, Eins resolved himself for the worst.

“Now then, I see you don’t have any weapons, and yet you still call yourself a magic soldier? It is slightly unfitting for a nobility of a rural area to hire someone like you, don’t you think? But it seems that they don’t have a choice but to do this in this place, I see”

Eins, making sure Elise is secure behind him, drew his sword he had on his waist.

“Eins. I’m sorry”

Trembling in fear in the situation, it was the only thing the miserable Elise could do now.

“Your Highness, you are wrong. In this situation, you have to say “I’ll leave it to you” instead”

While smiling so towards Elise, he turned around and faced the armed solder again.

“So, have you made up your mind? Then prepare your life to be taken. 『Feuer』!”

At that moment, flames dwelled instantly on the right hand of the man who was called the “Elder Brother”, and was released aiming for Eins. Eins, with a hair’s breadth avoided it to the side, and at once he filled the interval between them quickly, then swung his sword towards that protruding arm from his lower left.

Just before Ein’s sword reached that arm, a second flame aiming at him rushed from his side, making him jump back in a hurry.

“『Feuer』, huh. Indeed, you are a magic soldier of the empire. With this, I can now see the general view of the situation”

“Hmph. Well, that will be irrelevant now because you will lose your life here”

As he said so, he reiterated his right hand to fire another fire magic, aiming at Eins once more.

But Eins once again dodged that flame, and this time, he ran towards the other magician.

“Tch, 『Steife Brise』”

When the second magician invoked so, the space in front of it distorted, and the next moment, Eins was blown away from that spot.

“I knew it, this wind magic equation is also a system made by the empire too. Are you one of the hands of the Imperial Army by any chance?”

Because of receiving too much of a shock, using the sword as a cane, he then stood up and glared at the two magicians.

“Stop! Release me!”

Eins who was confronting the two magicians, looked towards Elise’s sudden outburst in a hurry. And from there, some of the people who were surrounding the Royal Guards from earlier are now grabbing the princess, and was about to take her with them.

“Stop!”

Eins whipped his staggering body and launched himself to the place of the princess. But at the moment he started running, a magic shockwave blew his defenseless body once again.

“Whoops, did you forget that you are in the middle of a fight?”

While saying so, the wind magician pulled out a dagger hidden from his bosom, removed its sheath, then swung down to give a decisive blow on Eins. Feeling regret from his actions, he closed his eyes, but his body wasn't seized with pain at all.

“Y-you bastard!”

The dagger the magic soldier swung down with confidence, was stopped by a longsword barely in front of the chest of Eins.

“Eins, didn't I tell you not to give up till the last moment!”

There, though his whole body was scorched including his armor, was the figure of Lute gazing him with no signs of wavering at all. Then Lute parried the dagger as it is, then cut the left arm of the opponent holding the dagger with his sword.

Because of too much pain, the wind magician writhed on the ground. Eins stoop up in that opportunity, then picked up his sword once again and gave thanks to Lute.

“Thank you very much. Now that you mentioned, you also told not to give up from the past. But the other senior always told me to “give it up quickly, then then devise an easier way immediately”, you see”

“Hmph, that's why I tell you he's no good”

Lute said so, twisting his lips forcibly to make a smile.

Chapter 11: Magic Battle

“That’s it, you are finished, bastard!”

As he applied magic to ease the pain and bleeding, the wind magician stood up while shaking in anger. The flame magician rushed to the side at once, and in order to take distance from Eins, he released a flame magic in the middle of him and Eins.

“Eins, how is the princess?”

“In the hands of those guys...”

“I see. So we only have to break through them first then chase those guys. I’ll leave that fire ‘rat’ in your care!”

As soon as Lute uttered those words, he dashed towards the magic soldier who had become one-handed.

Then accepting Lute’s command, Eins nodded and faced the flame magician.

“Well then, shall we go another round?”

Along with those words, Eins began to shorten the distance between them rapidly. As he arrived at the range of his word with another two more steps, flames charged again on the hands of the magician.

The moment he saw it, along with his right hand on the middle portion of the sword, Eins cried.

“『Freeze on!』!”

As soon as he shouted so, cold air surrounded the girth of the sword.

Although the flame magician was disturbed, the magician couldn’t cancel the flame magic anymore, and shot it at Eins with no other choice. Eins with his pale cold sword cut the flames into two, then along with the downward force of the swing he cut along the magician’s body as it is.

Meanwhile, Lute who confronted the Wind magician has developed an all-out magical battle.

“『Steife Brise』!”

“『Gale』!”

Distortion of air was created in front of the both sides, and although they shot forward, it clashed in the middle, creating an explosion then disappeared.

“You are also a magician?”

“Just because you were cut with a sword, you already thought I am a swordsman?”

“Don’t get cocky because you successfully hurt me with a surprise attack.『Wirbelwind』!”

When the magic soldier invoked so, a pressure twice as great as before fluctuated in the air, creating strong winds in front of him.

“Naïve. 『Whirlwind』!”

Winds of even a stronger scale was created before Lute, then is shot at the magician, swallowing the spell and the soldier as it is.

The magician was blown away by the pressure of the wind, soaring through the air, then with a large thud he ended up in the trunk of a burning giant tree that stood behind.

“Playtime is over. Princess Elise is waiting for me”

“Certainly your magic power seems to be above me. However, in this game, one must become the last one standing to be the winner! “

When the magician raised his left hand, Tarim’s soldiers attacked Lute from all sides one after another.

“Tch. Impudent. 『Gale』.”

Lute retreated back with a jump, then with a distortion of air in his left hand, he blew off the soldiers approaching his left side. However, from the back of the blown soldiers, new soldiers emerged and the encirclement was closed once again, surrounding Lute like a net.

“No matter how strong you are, it will be different with this number of people”

Seeing the of the private army encircling Lute that swelled up to ten people, the magician made a victor's smile.

But at that time they decided to break through towards the middle, Lute's right shoulder was suddenly tapped.

"Well, can one person join too?"

From there, was the appearance of Eins, covered with wounds all over his body.

"Eins, you've worked well enough. Just rest there quietly and watch"

"Nope. Not listening. Didn't you just said so earlier not to give up till the very end?"

To his reply, Lute smiled as if satisfied. Eins infected by him also smiled.

"Now then, did you enjoy your last conversation with each other? Let's finish this."

When the magician issued those words, the soldiers jumped at the two people at once.

Two people versus ten soldiers. With the use of magic they somehow reduce them to a half, but due their burn injuries, their movements gradually started to become dull. Moreover, the private soldiers who were supposed to be reduced by half received reinforcements, further increasing their numbers to 15 people even more.

While skillfully switching places with each other, the two people made it to not be surrounded somehow, but even though they handled the soldiers efficiently, the differences of the numbers made them impenetrably difficult, so eventually they are forced to retreat little by little.

"No matter how strong you are, you are already at your limits. Give up"

But the moment those words resounded in the air, an arrow all of a sudden pierces the temple of a soldier who was encircling them. And as the surrounding gaze gathered to him, the soldier fell forward in a sinking manner.

With the arrow coming through the side beyond their expectations, the soldiers turned their gazes to the direction the arrow came from. But as if

waiting for that chance, arrows of flame poured down from their heads, and several were pierced by those flaming arrows and fell down one after the other.

"Haa, I got late because of climbing this stupid mountain. Sorry 'bout that. Thus, let's have five more people join the fray, shall we?"

An unmotivated voice which didn't suit the surroundings reverberated, and from the private soldiers, the wind magician, and even Eins and Lute, they all turned their heads towards the direction where the voice originated.

And from there, stood the figure of a man who climbed the mountain all the way up here, catching his breath together with his subordinates.

Chapter 12: Reinforcements

"Uhmm, so, looking from the state you are right now, can I assume that Princess Elise was taken away already?"

"Boss, what shall we do? Only Boss and us can go ahead and chase them, but—"

Crary who was somewhat tired asked while leaning on the spear he held in his hand.

Yui who is also gasping for breath answered while panting.

"Eeh. Climbing up here gave us such a hard time already, so give it a break. Fuu, even if you hurry up there, it probably won't affect the future developments anyway. The main point is it would be safer if you put out the opponent with everyone, plus, this was the easiest way above all"

"Boss is still the same as ever. Well then it seems there are roughly twelve people left. A vague quantity which can't be divided by five people are still remaining"

"Hey you, why are you also numbering me too?"

"Didn't Boss said that you don't want to chase them a little while ago?"

"No, I mean I don't want to move anymore. So I don't intend to fight them. So it's 12 versus four, not five"

Despite of arriving in the battlefield, Yui denying to fight even showed a slight confusion to the private soldiers of Tarim.

But at that moment when the air slightly lazied, two swords gleamed, and alongside them, two heads of the soldiers flew.

"Yui, we'll make you a nice number that you can work easily!"

"Senior Yui, you actually haven't done anything yet, so please work a bit!"

Eins and Lute didn't miss that gap the moment the concentration of the soldiers slackened, and slashing the necks of the enemy soldiers closest to themselves, they entrusted it to them as they retreated to the rear.

"It can't be helped. Well, today I won't be moving with the team, so you all do as you like. The quota is two people per person"

As Yui said so while feeling reluctant, at the back, continuous firing of arrows that seemed almost without pause was shot as if to hit Yui's right temple, and at the same time two soldiers were penetrated in between their eyebrows simultaneously and collapsed.

"Captain, my quota is over"

Kains hung his prided bow towards his back immediately, and assumed a stance of an unconcerned spectator right away. Wanting to complain about the way he shoot those arrows near his face, he was about to opened his mouth, but at that moment, this time a magic flame arrow was released as if to hit his left temple, it burned a little of Yui's hair and pierced through the bodies of the two soldiers nearby.

"And that's it for my share"

Nanya said so, while blowing his protruded index finger which released the flame arrow, then went down to the rear.

"Aaaah, my hair. Why can't you feel respect to your boss a little more?"

Touching the hair that had scorched a little with his left hand, Yui breathed a sigh.

"Boss, while you are complaining those things, they are approaching before your eyes"

"Oh, they'd think that we have ran out of projectiles, right? Well then, Huth, are you good?"

When he turned his gaze onto Huth, with her usual posture of putting her drawn sword on her shoulder, she nodded at once.

Three people break into a run as if it was a signal.

First, Crary who has the longest reach made a thrust as if picking up his prey, then the vanguard soldier was pierced to death. At the next moment, a soldier trying to aim for that gap jumped at Crary, but Huth who is behind Crary accelerated with a leap, brandishing her sword that reflected light, the soldier

who tried to jump was split into two from the center, then fell down.

After Yui and his company's arrival, six people were dealt already with surprising swiftness, and the soldiers who have already became fewer than Yui and the others, realizing the foreboding of defeat turn their tails and began to run away. Crary and Huth started running as not to miss their backs, and each person furthermore dealt with one additional person each.

Fortunately for them, the two remaining soldiers who shook off the pursuit of Crary and Huth threw out both their swords and their helmets while running, and dashed away from the place while rolling about.

"Fighting is always futile....."

Placing his hand onto his waist, Yui uttered so, then moved his eyes to the halfway up the mountain where the blaze of the fire is weakening with distant eyes.

Nanya who caught up with his speech and behavior walked closely on to Yui, then pulled out a backhander to his right temple.

"What was that for? Isn't winning without fighting the supreme victory?"

"You, you said a while ago that the quota is two per person!"

"I haven't said that you have to kill them or anything, you know. Because my opponent ran away, isn't that a win by default?"

At the moment when he said that, Nanya reinstated a backhander once more.

Yui unconsciously crouched to the power of the fist. While looking at his appearance, Eins remained as usual, and supported by Lute, he came up to him.

"Senior Yui, what happened to the magician?"

"Oh, are you talking about that one-armed guy? He was the first to run away when arrived"

Still rubbing the temporal side of his head where the pain still remained, Yui responded to Eins.

"Is that so? Then Senior Yui, did you not see the soldier who took Elise while you came here?"

"Well, because we climbed up from the pavement of the workshop, we haven't seen a thing. But if you think of it, normally, if you make a forest fire, usually it will make a big fuss and someone will come running. So probably they will not descend through normal routes"

"You have a point. However, tracking them will be a lot more difficult with this....."

Eins said so, lowering his head in agony.

"Well, it is certainly hard to track them in this state. Anyway, can you tell me what happened in the mountain while we're out?"

As Yui asked so, Eins in a muffled tone told him the events that happened in the workshop: the seizing of the evidences of selling through illegal channels, their encounter of the wildfire in the mountain immediately after the moment they returned which maybe perhaps the fault of the Tarim faction, their separation with the escorts, and how Her Highness was taken away.

By the time Eins has finished speaking, Lute walked beside him and suddenly lowered his head.

"Sorry, Yui. To be honest with you, when you were dismissed as an escort, I felt a little sense of superiority. That even without you, it is sufficient with me alone. I should have advised Her Highness not to have done that to you. If you think it calmly, it was like she had spit on my rival's face. You should have thought about the possibility of this counterattack already. And on top of that, we also made a foolish deed to drive away those who are familiar with the geography of this land and acted only by ourselves. And the result was this sorry state new are now....."

Seeing the usual high and mighty Lute bowing his head to him of the same age group, Yui could only shake his head left and right and told him.

"This is a loan, Lute. And because you'll pay it back with interest sooner or later, we're good with this"

"Err, boss, I think all you did was slack around earlier. You are the only one who hasn't done anything yet, you know?"

"Oi, shut it"

Making Yui cry out in reflex to the sharp riposte of Crary, every one of Yui's men burst into laughter.

"Yeah yeah. For now we will now commence the rescue of Princess Elise. This also means another loan that you will pay hereafter. Yep. That's all there is to it"

Looking at Yui trying to regain his dignity from being flustered earlier, signs of relief showed on Lute's tense face.

Yui still tried to defend himself, but seeing Lute's change of expression, he swallowed his follow-up words instead. Then, Lute, seeing Yui's reaction, tightens his expression once again, then presents his own information.

"Eins gave you the rough explanation of things, but regarding the mountain wildfire, I think it's alright now. Along with the soldiers and chamberlains who can use freezing magic at the center, they have been able to escape. And since the fire is gradually beginning to weaken compared from earlier, you could guess that the flame magician Eins cut down earlier might had intermittently spreading the fire from the start. With that punk gone, the fire of this extent will pose problems to my subordinates no more. But the problem isPrincess Elise"

"Agreed. I was also focused in battle, so I wasn't able to confirm from what direction they have taken Princess Elise away. At this rate, we won't be able to track them"

"Nobody knows which route Her Highness was taken away, so it would be pretty impossible to find out. But I know exactly where Princess Elise is going, so all we have to do is sieze her on that place"

Upon hearing Yui's words, Lute as well as Eins could only take a gasp.

"Boss, where exactly is the princess being taken to?"

The moment Crary asked, all the eyes of the surroundings focused on Yui.

"To the same place Kureha is staying at. Count Tarim's place"

Chapter 13: Tarim

Currently in his villa, Count Tarim is roaming around the floor of his detached residence.

“Have those punks arrived yet?”

He shouted in anger towards his subordinate.

In the current situation, the count was getting impatient. The Nome Brothers who are the magicians of the Empire haven’t returned at all.

Due to the fear of being condemned by the kingdom, Tarim planned to kidnap the princess as a hostage and then head towards the Empire. Though this was all a makeshift plan because of the sudden unexpected inspection of the princess, if things went accordingly, the princess should be successfully separated from the Royal Guards by now.

After that, the Nome Brothers consisting of Quasim, the fire magician and Nerud, the wind magician are supposed to bridge his asylum to the Empire, but the problem is, not even one of them has returned yet.

As long as these two who will serve as his guide to the Empire haven’t returned, Tarim will not be able to move yet, and could only wait in silence.

“Sorry for being late”

The door of the hall was opened, and from there, the magician who was disarmed came inside. The moment he saw that face, the Count’s anger burst towards him.

“That was too late, Nerud! You are telling me earlier that we won’t encounter any problems in the actual plan, but look at your state right now!”

“We have commanded over soldiers that even you cannot handle, we have secured the princess from the hands of those Royal Guards, and I even lost my hand and my brother in the process. And you still say you’re unsatisfied yet?”

Though he has lost his arm, still taking pride in having successfully kidnapping the princess under difficult circumstances, Nerud stared at the back of Tarim.

And from there, having both her hands tied behind her back, together with a gag in her mouth, was Princess Elise, scowling at Tarim himself.

"Okay, okay. You're right. We shall leave for the Empire right away. You all, start the preparations!"

Tarim shouted an order to his surrounding subordinates, who in turn rushed towards the entrance of the hall to start the arrangements right away. But at that moment, the front door of the hall exploded, blowing off almost all of the soldiers nearby. After that, arrows pierced all the way through the foreheads of the remaining ones who survived. Two more arrows headed for Tarim and Nerud's heads, but manipulating the flow of the wind, the wind magician deflected the trajectory of the arrows.

"What is this?"

Unable to grasp what happened, Tarim gave a shriek on the spot.

"Wow, talk about hitting the jackpot. Not only the princess, but it seems that all the insurgents are gathered here. I just didn't expect that there are this many of them left. Really, just to reduce the numbers a bit, it gave me a really hard time to judge for the best timing."

From there, a black haired man appeared from the place where the entrance previously was before being blown away.

"Good timing he says, yet it was all me who breached the door"

As the voice said so, a female soldier with red hair entered the hall, followed by Crary and the others from behind.

"You— you're Ystats from the royal capital. What is the meaning of this?"

"What's the meaning of this, you say? Don't you yourself know this best? Though we'd appreciate it if you release the tied lady at your back for the time being"

Yui replied with a bitter smile, but Tarim turned to Nerud standing beside him in anger,

"And you said you are not being followed, Nerud!"

and screamed in protest towards him who was still shocked by the situation.

“Fool, I certainly scanned the rear for any magic fluctuation until I reached here for many times. And first of all, I left the battlefield earlier than them and have passed the other hideouts before I came here. It’s impossible for me to have been followed”

Nerud immediately refuted the count that he didn’t miss anything.

“Yep, the magician of the Imperial Army over there is right. Since I came straight from Croceon without stopping, I was able to catch up with him. In fact, the one who has been tracked is you, count. My men have been monitoring you for a very long time~. How you gathered up your soldiers, what you did in the Magic Stone Workshop, and when you brought Elise to you”

“What did you say?!”

Yui’s words made Tarim stiffen even more. All his anger when he shouted his subordinate a while ago vanished in existence.

“Now then, I’ll give you some advice, Count Tarim. You release the princess and leave the money you have been embezzled entirely, or else...”

“or else what? Are you stupid? I have the princess here. You should be the ones to throw your weapons and surrender. NOW”

Tarim took out a knife and moved next to the bound princess.

“What should we do, Boss?”

Well, I guess we have no choice but to obey his instructions”

“But!”

Although Kains tried to object, Yui shook his head and threw away his sword bound to his waist, to the ground. Seeing his figure, the others also followed suit.

“Good. Nerud, Erase them”

“Hmph. I don’t really like it this way, but I have to return the favor for doing my arm,”

As he said so, Nerud advanced his step and faced Yui.

“You, you are called Nerud, aren’t you? I have nothing against you, so would

you at least forgive me for this?”

“I’m very sorry, but I have to send you to the other world with your companions altogether. With that, please resolve yourself. Also, to the two people at the rear, even though you already thrown your weapons, please refrain from using any magic”

Looking at Lute and Nanya who were preparing their magic, they clicked their tongues and cancelled their magic immediately.

Perceiving that, Nerud smiled, looking satisfied.

“Well then, sayonara, everyone. Wilberwind”

As Nerud said so, gust of winds was created before him.

“Magic Code Access”

But at the exact moment he saw the gust developing, he Yui muttered then started running towards Nerud.

“It’s futile. Die!”

Nerud exclaimed, aiming the gust of winds at Yui then shoots. But at the moment the turbulence was about to hit him, Yui shouted.

“Crack!”

At the same time, he tore the approaching winds with his right hand. The trajectory of the wind sharply turned, running straight towards Tarim.

“Wha-“

Unable to react to the unexpected phenomenon, Tarim was directly hit by the gust and was blown away. Confirming it with his eyes, Yui then exclaimed.

“Crary, hand it over!

As soon as he heard that voice, Crary threw the sword he had picked up from the distraction forward. Upon receiving it, Yui unsheathed the sword then slashed at Nerud’s body in a straight line.

“Wow, I didn’t expect it would work so well”

Yui put on a sigh as he stared at Nerud’s now dead body. Then, he walked

towards Elise, and undo her restraints.

"Ah, sorry to have kept you waiting, my princess"



"Yeah, you really have kept me waiting, really"

Seeing Elise's body state quivering up to her feet while shedding tears, Yui's evaluation of the princess was renewed once again.

Chapter 14: Carlin

When Yui and the others restrained Tarim who fainted by Yui's wind spell, it was already dark when they returned to the town of Carlin.

Yui asked Crary to bind Tarim and put him in the army prison, while he himself escorted Elise to the villa of Earl Samuel. Afterwards, he entrusted himself to the bed prepared in advance, then slept like mud as it is.

"Sir Ystats, Sir Ystats"

Hearing the voice from the outside of the door, Yui woke up. Confused by the situation, he opened the door with his eyes still half-open, and from there, a maid employed by Earl Samuel stood before him.

"Sir Ystats, the earl is summoning you. Can you come at once?"

After being told of the important matter by the maid, he realized that he was still dressed in the same clothes when he returned. Upon requesting the maid to tell him that he'll be ready in about half an hour, he got himself changed hurriedly, head towards Samuel's room, then gave the sturdy door a sound knock.

"Mr. Ystats? Come in"

As he heard Samuel's voice from the inside, Yui entered the room. From there, Ernst and Mayor Samuel came to his view, waiting on the sofa.

Samuel offered the seat across Yui, then thanked the officer with his head held down.

"Please, mayor. No need to bow your head. I'm just doing my job"

"Yeah, you certainly are. Your subordinates even 'Captain took all of the good parts' said to me"

With Ernst teasing him a bit, as if glossing over the situation, Yui could only give a dry smile.

"Nonetheless, I have heard from her Highness, you've been monitoring the actions of Tarim for a while now and it seems you've already conducted an

investigation, is it true?”

“Yes, it is as you proclaim”

“Then what came in your mind to investigate such person as Tarim? No, I understand that you came here for the internal audit of the Carlin Army. However, as I hear your reputation, this may be rude of me, but why are you taking this work so seriously? I do not understand at all”

As if giving up, Yui scratched his head and gave a dry laugh.

“Haa~, it’s no use hiding it now, huh. Basically, it’s my principle to work as easily and as efficiently as possible. Therefore, you can say that this time coincides with that, you see”

“What does that mean?”

Samuel urged Yui to continue.

“You see, you know that the forces of Tarim are already quite corroded inside the Carlin army, right? As for me who want to work freely and easily here, I just thought that it was unproductive to raise a commotion due to misconducts of the military, so I started it, little by little. Certainly, if you take actions immediately by tracing the fraudsters and rectify them each time, you will be able to clean up the first few cases just as easily. However, if you take such kind of actions, they will then adapt and carry out illegal acts in the form of not easy to understand immediately, which then negates it as a fundamental solution”

“Indeed. And?”

“And so, I pretended not to see the irregularities from the beginning. Then they gradually they started to become more active as before without minding my eyes on them. After that they told me “please investigate Tarim’s crimes”, and all I did was put together all Tarim’s wrongdoings on a list, simple as that. Actually just a little more and I would report to the upper military officials and stand at the stage, but a miscalculation occurred because of that Princess Elise suddenly angrily barging in”

And so, Yui gave a laugh at the mayor, but at the same time, the door that was on the side of Samuel’s room suddenly opened, and with inflated cheeks, the figure of the ‘suddenly angrily barging in’ Elise was revealed before him.

“My bad, for suddenly angrily barging in!”

“I’m sorry, did you hear that? It must have slipped off my tongue”

“No, this time you’re right. After all, I got so much help from you. Allow me to formally express my gratitude. Thank you very much”

“Your words are wasted on me”

Yui said so, being sorry.

“Although I couldn’t give you that much, is there something you want as a reward? Of course it should be within the scope of my capabilities”

“Like money or rights?”

“Well, it would be a pleasure if a snob like you would want such things”

Elise said so with a grin towards Yui.

“No, thank you. But there is just one thing I would like to request”

“What is it? Please tell me”

As she muttered so, Elise walked towards the sofa Yui’s been sitting on, sat next to him, then stared so at Yui as if appraising him. Feeling embarrassed on being stared, Yui averted his gaze and after a little while, he answered.

“Could you please connect me to the head of Lute Hannenburg, the current escort chief?”

When Yui said so, the three people present looked at him in surprise.

“Ystats, I think the princess is giving you an opportunity to return to the capital with this favor. Are you really alright with just one unrelated personnel?”

Samuel who didn’t think of Yui demanding an unrelated person’s connection as a reward asked in reflex.

“It’s fine. Now that the Tarims are now gone in this town, I will be able to fully enjoy this place from now on”

Yui said so, shaking his head left and right as he smiled in denial.

“I’ll confirm it with the other person, but are you really fine with that? Saving

a royalty's life also means giving you a chance to raise yourself a certain degree of promotion, and perhaps if I asked father, it is also possible for you to become a noble even more”

“I humbly decline. If I choose promotion, I will be working as a commanding officer of an even more troops at this age. This is already enough. Also, being a noble is out of my capabilities, and even if I’m told that they will give me peerage and the like, as my extra work will only increase, I’d rather refuse instead”

He said so, smiling while staring at the eyes of Elise. Elise, seeing the unperturbed feelings in Yui’s eyes, could only nod gently.

“Fufufu, you are really an interesting man. Quite different from the rumors I’ve been hearing throughout the capital”

“Though those rumors are not my matter of concern, I would be thankful for you not to speak of it, as it will certainly keep me awake tonight if I hear any single one of them”

“But even then you don’t have to be this reserved. Well, about the escort chief Lute’s matter, it will be done, but even with my standing I won’t be liable so I won’t be able to give him protection at all. Therefore, I’m sorry but I cannot prevent him being demoted. However, by the name of Elise Fon Eltobourgh, let alone his punishment, I will make sure that he will not be chased out from the army”

“I am grateful. He will certainly be able to get back at once from his demotion. This will be enough”

As if boasting his own colleague’s ability, Yui said so with full confidence on his face.

In the next morning, the day the princess and her party would return to the kingdom, Yui came in front of the earl’s villa where everyone is gathering to see her off.

“Seeing Senior Yui dropping to see me off in this early in the morning, will it rain on our way home?”

“I am a soldier of the army too, you know? Like what I taught you in the old

days, being a late riser and being a late comer have different meanings”

Yui said so with a serious look towards Eins. Seeing that face, Eins burst into laughter.

“Oh yeah, I happened to pass by Sir Yui’s subordinate a while ago before going home, but when I asked your whereabouts, do you know what he said? “Boss never gets up at this time””

With Crary’s face popping up in his mind, Yui looked back at Eins, and from there, he noticed the visible scratches and burns peeking out between his clothes.

“You had a terrible experience this time. Make sure to relax for a while when you got back to the capital”

“That’s impossible, sir. A big incident has just happened. We will surely be stormed by reports when we got back to the kingdom for sure. If else, I’m jealous of you sir, being able to run away from this commotion, really”

Thinking of what will happen after he get back, a depressed face floated on Eins’ face, and afterwards, a sigh. Yui seeing his slump figure gave a loud laugh, and as if finding the location of the two, Lute issued instructions to his subordinates, came down his horse and approached the two.

“Yui. Eins. This time I’m really indebted to both of you”

“Not really. Cooperating with each other is a part of our job. It just happened that we have the same objectives that time, that’s all”

Lute shook his head, then broke into a smile.

“Yui, though I haven’t admitted this till now, even though I’ve been stuck with you for so many times, this time I made up my mind. Come back to the capital!”

“And I have told you this so many times already. Don’t wanna”

“That’s fine with me. Anyway, when you come back I’ll make sure you’ll work under me. Even if you hate me for it”

“Lute.....”

“Besides, I’ll tell you this now. Prepare yourself. Because you may likely to

return to the capital soon enough”

Lute took a glance at the wagon, then added further.

“You still don’t know what Princess Elise is like. That person is not the patient type to just give up and let go of what she likes”

“Eh, what do you mean?”

“Ah, she certainly is that, no doubt about it. Senior Yui, my condolences”

Eins who said along made an expression as if implying something to Yui.

Then a royal guard came towards Eins and Lute, telling them it’s time to depart.

“Well then, shall we go? Yui, be sure to enjoy this vacation, because this will probably be your last”

Lute went and approached the horse’s straddle, and with him at the lead, the group headed to the direction towards the kingdom.

As Yui gazed at the back of the line from his place, the window at the centre of the carriage was opened.

From there, a slender white arm came out of the said window, and as if saying goodbye to Yui, it waved up and down many times. Many times.

Chapter 15: Later Developments

Two months passed away since the princess' party have left Carlin. But on a certain morning Yui was summoned by Ernst.

"Sorry for calling you so early in the morning"

"No, I don't mind it, sir. So, what can I be of service?"

Though these matters does not come often normally at this early, as if it was inevitable, Yui stood in front of Ernst for work.

"There are two matters We have to talk about. Perhaps, you won't be pleased by this, but Ystats, you are now promoted to 5th class"

"A promotion, huh....."

Yui, as if loathing the word 'promotion' in his mind, gave an unfavorable response regarding his rising in rank to fifth class.

"To be able to show such expression after being told of his promotion, of all the Royal Army I have encountered, you are the only one who gave that face"

"That's because promotion is directly proportionate to increase of work and worries, you know? And the other one?"

Yui, while having a forced smile urged Ernst to continue.

"Well, this is another issue"

As Ernst said so, he took out a letter from his desk drawer and handed it to Yui.

"This is?"

"A transfer order. You are to return to the kingdom"

Ernst, predicting his reaction, shut his eyes to avoid seeing Yui's current expression.

"Army Chief, can't you have the power to oppose this letter of appointment?"

"I thought you might say that. Honestly, it's pretty difficult this time. Try

looking at the sender of the sealed letter”

Yui turned over the sealed letter, confirming the name of the sender.

And from there, the name Elise Fon Eltobourgh was inscribed.

The moment he saw that name, Yui could only scratch his head and heave a deep sigh.